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Therapist Magazine

OCT/NOV/DEC 2018

ISSUE 28

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NO PAIN, ALL GAIN
Thinking about chronic pain



Foreword



Autumn News from Complementary Health Professionals

As 2018 draws to a close we can reflect on a very exciting year for CHP. We have grown quite substantially as our name becomes synonymous with quality and value for money in the support and services we give to our members and our accredited schools and colleges. I am sure you agree as a member and please do promote membership to your colleagues as you receive rewards now for referring new members to us (see the website for details and ensure your colleague names you on their application form). Since we took over from the AAPA in October 2015, we now have 300 new members and we accredit an additional 11 colleges, all around the UK, with two other pending approval. Our aim is to eventually be able to have two conferences per year, one in the North of England as well as the one we currently do every year in London.

We continue to work with the CNHC and this year we have collaboratively worked on a new Core Curriculum for Reflexology, which was published in June and we have just participated in the one for Aromatherapy. As one of their verifying organisations, we have reviewed many qualifications from all over the world and helped many people bring their skills up to the required level. Many of you have also become valued CHP members.

We look forward to continued growth in 2019 and to helping our members develop their skills through courses being offered through all our accredited provision. You can always be assured that our accredited school and colleges provide quality courses for you to help your therapy business expand. We want you to be successful and to make your living loving what you do.

We have recently re-applied to be a member on the General Council for Soft Tissue Therapies (GCMT). It is our aim to ensure our members and schools have a voice on the Council, as we do as part of the CNHC. We remain a member of the Aromatherapy Council, although this body is largely dormant now due to the activities within the CNHC but it remains in place should the profession need to work on anything essential for the profession in the future.

CHP Annual Conference - 20th October 2018

The conference in October was another huge success and enjoyed by everyone who attended. We were praised for the diversity of subjects, with a nice mix between theory, practice and general business information. The speakers this year were outstanding once again and we thank you all for giving your time to come and share your knowledge and experience with our members.



The goody bags were a nice addition to this year's conference. We would like to thank Base Formula for supplying two different types of oil samples and Songbird for the

massage wax samples. Both companies offer CHP members a whopping 15% off orders, so make sure you register with them in order to benefit from this as a member.

Therapy Awards 2018

Student of the Year: went to Gerry Houghton MCHP. Gerry was overwhelmed upon the announcement of her name being called and delighted to be recognised for her hard work whilst studying reflexology last year, despite many personal hardships. Gerry practices aromatherapy and reflexology in South East London.



Practitioner of the Year: went to Sarah Yow MCHP. Sarah practices in Cambridge and Norwich and her website is www.routesstohealing.com. Sarah mainly practices Inner Energy Healing, which is an advanced form of Chirokinetic Therapy that uses touch for health style muscle testing and McTimoney style flicks on reflex points on the skull and feet to release old patterns and issues that the body needs to let go of and balance. She offers this as a CHP accredited diploma in Cambridge too if you are interested in finding out more, along with a CHP accredited diploma in Reflexology and Indian Head Massage.





continued...



We did not have any nominations for Complementary Therapy Business of the Year and we appreciate that this is a difficult one to fill as all therapists are actually in business. So, this year, we decided to award a **Fellowship** for the first time. This goes to **Sue Lincoln**, who sadly could not be with us at the conference. She operates her business in Scarborough in North Yorkshire. Her school actually won CAM Therapy School of the Year in 2015 through Holistic Therapist Magazine and the Holistic Business Awards and she does offer quality diploma courses and a whole host of excellent CPD courses, which you will find advertised on our events page and on Sue's own website www.therapytrainingcentre.co.uk

Well done to everyone who was nominated this year and we have now updated the nomination form on the CHP website for 2019. Could 2019 be your year? You receive a certificate and a logo to place on your website and marketing materials. We also advertise you on our website, Facebook page and Twitter as well as in this magazine. The nomination form can be downloaded from the CHP website under the dropdown for membership. **Get your clients and colleagues involved in nominating you.** You do need to be able to come to the conference should you win.

Soon we will be thinking about next year's conference, so if you have any suggestions for speakers or there is a

particular area you would like us to include next time, please do get in touch with us at our normal email address: enquiries@complementaryhealthprofessionals.co.uk

Welcome to Jing Advanced Massage Training



We are delighted to announce that we now accredit all the Jing massage courses. Based in Brighton, Jing offer a wide range of courses

to enhance your massage practice and it is internationally recognised as a Centre of Excellence. Jing offers the UK's only degree level course in massage, the award winning 3 year BTEC level 6 Professional Diploma in Advanced Clinical & Sports Massage, now all accredited by Complementary Health Professionals. You can just opt to do the 1 year Advanced Clinical Massage course to increase your skill set rather than the whole 3 years, but this is entirely up to you how far you go. Jing also offer over 30 CPD courses, in subjects such as myofascial release, living anatomy, and specialist courses for massaging particular areas of the body and treating specific conditions. Check out what's on offer at www.jingmassage.com

Welcome to academyCP

We are delighted also to be able to welcome academyCP to our newest accredited schools. Managed by Catherine Peel, this private therapy college is situated in Bacup in Lancashire and we have accredited their Massage and Aromatherapy Diplomas and CPD courses in Holistic Facial Facelift Massage, Bamboo Massage, No Hands Massage and Colon Massage. For more information, please view their website at www.academycp.co.uk



Excellent news on our Block Insurance Scheme

We are pleased to be able to announce that we have re-negotiated the insurance rates we have with our block insurance scheme through Holistic Insurance Services. The annual cost has been reduced to £49 per year. We feel this scheme offers great value for money and has a good deal of additional benefits not afforded by all other insurers. As well as £5,000,000 indemnity and malpractice cover, you receive jury service compensation, support for data protection prosecution, HMRC investigation, 24 hour legal advice line and a counselling service provided by professional counsellors via a free telephone link. For more information visit the insurance page on the CHP website or contact Holistic Insurance Services on **0345 222236** or email info@holisticinsurance.co.uk.

We wish you all a very nice Christmas and New Year break that will be just around the corner by the time you receive your magazine. Remember that there are lots of resources for you to help your business in the member's only area of the website and the New Year is a good time to plan your CPD activities for 2019. There is a list on the website of what constitutes CPD, if you are unsure and of course you can always contact us in the office for help and support at any time.



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Editor's Letter



Hello again,

Someone asked me the other day when I was first introduced to holistic health and wellbeing. I had to think a bit, because my family weren't the type of people who went to spas, meditated or practiced the Alexander Technique. After a few moments, I realised that I had actually been introduced to several holistic ideas before I even started school.

I remember being stung by a nettle and my aunt showing me how to find a dock leaf and how to use it to relieve pain. A few years later, I can recollect her explaining that about half our family had a very high pain threshold and could think pain away. She taught me to mentally travel down my veins or arteries and visualise the pain disappearing. In retrospect, I think she also knew a fair amount of child psychology, but it's still a technique I use today.

Getting the message over about the benefits of holistic therapy isn't always as easy as demonstrating a dock leaf to a four year old, yet it's essential that we all reach out and widen the reach and acceptance of holistic therapy as a valid form of treatment. We have so much to contribute to making people healthier and happier, to helping them change, particularly when it comes to both chronic pain and lifestyle diseases. That's why I'm particularly pleased to have a feature about the new Hawthorn Health App, which will gather data which can be used towards creating a body of scientific evidence that holistic therapies can and do work, and that a whole person approach is often more successful in the long term than simply handing over a bottle of pills.

We've got plenty of ideas in this issue to help you spread the message and to help build your own business as a result. You'll find advice on making social media work for you, how to use free training to build your business, treating chronic pain, planning for long term success and much more.

Talking of getting messages out there, if you haven't seen our new consumer title, Holistic Health Magazine, then here's a link to the first issue.

www.holistichealthmag.com/viewable-magazine/

We hope you love both this issue of Holistic Therapist and the new magazine as much as we enjoyed creating them.

Love,

Alison x

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OTHER ISSUE 28 CONTRIBUTORS AND PEOPLE WE'D LIKE TO THANK

FHT, PRAVERA, CLAIRE SQUIRE, NORDIC CUDDLE, BEATRICE DOUBLE OF THE CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION, STORY MASSAGE, MARC LAZARE, STOREY PUBLISHING, MELAINA EVANS, PUJA MCCLYMONT, AND EVERYONE ELSE WHO HELPED OUT BEHIND THE SCENES ON THIS ISSUE.

HERBAL MEDICINE WARNING FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

A survey recently published in BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine, reported that many pregnant women may be combining the use of drugs with herbal medications without realising the potential dangers of such interactions.

The most commonly reported herbal treatments used ginger, chamomile, cranberry, raspberry (often as a leaf tea) and fish oils. The most commonly taken drugs were anti-biotics, opiate pain killers, anti-emetics and thyroid medications. The survey did not include over the counter drugs. Over half the women surveyed used at least one prescription



drug during pregnancy.

In a survey size of 889 respondents, the researchers identified 34 potential issues due to direct chemical toxicity, herb-drug and herb-herb interactions, incorrect dosing, toxic constituents, and product adulteration.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION TO ENDORSE TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

The World Health Organisation is set to give Traditional Chinese Medicine a formal endorsement next May, at the World Health Assembly. The WHO will include a chapter on TCM in the 11th edition of the "International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems".

A classification system on traditional medicine will be featured in Chapter 26 of the work, which provides a system of diagnostic codes for classifying thousands of diseases, according to a report published this week in the British scientific journal Nature.

The safety and

effectiveness of TCM is still controversial in China where around 16% of adverse drug reactions are related to traditional medicine. The Chinese government has set a national strategy for TCM development, bringing TCM theory and practice win greater acceptance in world medical circles so it can claim a share of the US\$50 billion global medicine market. As part of this drive, the country plans to establish 30 overseas TCM centres, to register 100 TCM products and set up 50 international TCM cooperation model centres.

US STATES TURN TO ACUPUNCTURE IN FACE OF OPIOID CRISIS

In 2017, more than 49,000 people in the USA died from fatal use of opioid drugs. The fatalities are often attributed to the overuse of prescription painkillers.

It has been reported that opioid prescriptions issued by The Veterans Health Administration, the USA's largest integrated healthcare system patients surged by 270 percent since the early 2000s and contributed to a rate of overdose deaths nearly double to that of the general population.

The VA is now expanding the use of acupuncture as an alternative to opioid painkillers and no longer requires acupuncturists have a medical degree to practice.

Some US states have also started to fund acupuncture treatments for pain through their Medicaid programmes. Ohio, California, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Oregon and Massachusetts currently provide acupuncture and Delaware and Washington State are examining the possibility.



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LIFESTYLE CHANGES REDUCE THE NEED FOR **BLOOD PRESSURE** MEDICATIONS

The American Heart Association has reported that people with high blood pressure reduced the need for antihypertensive medications by making lifestyle changes. A 16-week program, focused on the DASH diet, weight management and exercise, resulted in the most dramatic declines in blood pressure.

“Lifestyle modifications, including healthier eating and regular exercise, can greatly decrease the number of patients who need blood pressure-lowering medicine. That’s particularly the case in folks who have blood pressures in the range of 130 to 160 mmHg systolic and between 80 and 99 mmHg diastolic,” said study author Alan Hinderliter, M.D., associate professor of medicine at University of North



Carolina in Chapel Hill.

About 16 million people in the UK have high blood pressure, with a third having no awareness of this. High blood pressure is the main risk factor for stroke and a major risk factor for heart attack, heart failure and kidney disease. There is also increasing evidence that it is a risk factor for vascular dementia.

NEW IDEAS IN RETIREMENT LIVING

An aging population, who want to enjoy good health for as long as possible, are driving the creation of new types of housing developments designed to integrate care and community.

Plans for a new retirement village near Swansea are seeking to provide holistic and medical care alongside existing care home facilities in an integrated approach to later life living. The application, which seeks to build 79 retirement bungalows, also includes a doctor’s surgery and a wellbeing spa. The village would be built alongside two existing care homes, which house

232 residents, creating a large retirement community.

Similarly, a new care home in Yorkshire includes a street of 1950s style shop fronts to make dementia sufferers more comfortable and less confused. The Five Rise Nursing Home in Bingley includes an old-style barber shop, cobbled streets, a toy shop and a grocery store. There are even vintage cars parked on the street.



NORFOLK KINESIOLOGISTS AIM FOR WORLD RECORD

A group of Norfolk kinesiologists have taken part in a world record attempt to have the highest number of countries participating in a 24-hour worldwide energy balance. The event was organised by the International Kinesiology College (IKC) with similar events taking place simultaneously in many countries.

Rachel Lead who took part in the event in Norwich explained, “We haven’t had the official result yet, but we believe the world record target was met. The International Kinesiology College wanted to help bring energy, health, love and well-being to the world and to raise the awareness of Muscle Response Testing. Any funds raised in the UK will go to the TFH charity.

“We were very excited to have an opportunity to promote muscle/meridian movement and how this helps to bring positive affirmation into people’s lives”. The other kinesiologists that took part were Rita Rozsas, Rachel Marrs, and Susanne Lakin, alongside Carol Catt, an Optimum Health Balance practitioner.”



WORDS OF WISDOM...

I learned a few years ago that balance is the key to a happy and successful life, and a huge part of achieving that balance is to instil rituals into your everyday life - a nutritious balanced diet, daily exercise, time for yourself through meditation, reading, journaling, yoga, daily reflection, and setting goals.

Gretchen Bleiler

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TRY THIS... MAGNESIUM



Magnesium is a bit of an unsung hero which makes an essential contribution to overall health and wellbeing. It's found in leafy green veg, whole grains, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, some beans, peanuts and pumpkin

seeds. Chocolate also contains magnesium, so cravings can indicate a magnesium deficiency. Other signs of deficiency include neck and back pain, insomnia, and anxiety.

Magnesium keeps nerves, bones and muscles healthy, and can help with maintaining sugar levels, reducing back pain and is involved in more than 300 biochemical reactions in the body, as well as being a cure for constipation.

Magnesium lotions and oils are also great for dealing with dry or dull skin and are instantly soothing.

GOVERNMENT UNVEILS DETAILED WELLBEING STATISTICS

The Office of National Statistics has just released UK and county level results of their latest research into personal wellbeing. The results demonstrate how factors such as health, access to services and crime levels may affect how people rate their well-being in different parts of the UK. There are four measures of personal wellbeing, with health being rated as the most important.

While the average ratings across the four measures of personal well-being in the UK were unchanged, people Scotland reported an increase in ratings for the feeling that what they were doing in life was worthwhile. A greater percentage than previously gave this very high ratings. Wales provided a polarised picture, with a larger percentage of people in Wales reporting low levels of



feeling worthwhile and happiness; interestingly, a larger proportion of people in Wales reported both low levels of life satisfaction but also very high levels of life satisfaction, suggesting greater disparity in life satisfaction in Wales compared with the UK overall. Those in Northern Ireland continued to report better average ratings across all personal well-being measures. The full data set can be accessed at via www.ons.gov.uk.

DIARY DATES

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Here's our pick of a few interesting events, exhibitions and courses coming up before the end of the year. Further details and tickets via Eventbright.co.uk unless otherwise noted.

OCTOBER

SELF-COMPASSION FOR RESILIENCE:

5th Oct - 4 week course. Insole Court, Cardiff | *Tickets £56 upwards.*

STRANDED – DRU YOGA

7th Oct - at St. Mary's Lighthouse Mini-retreat. Whitley Bay | *Tickets from £42.51.*

INTRODUCTION TO BIODYNAMICS

20th Oct - Free Global Gardens Cardiff.

VEGFEST UK

27 - 28th Oct - Olympia London | <http://Olympia.london>.

GONG AND KIRTAN WORKSHOP FOR THE SOUL

28th Oct - Aylmerton Village Hall | *£20 upwards.*

NOVEMBER

MIND BODY SPIRIT WELLBEING FESTIVAL

2-4th Nov - NEC Birmingham.

CREATE YOUR LIFE:

3rd Nov - vision board workshop. University of Suffolk. Ipswich | *Tickets £3 upwards.*



RHYTHM MOBILITY WORKSHOP

24th Nov - for qualified massage therapists taught by Darien Pritchard. Stockport | *Tickets from £32.93 to £66.27.*

THE SECRET LIFE OF FASCIA

25th Nov - Free film showing at YogaJo's Glasgow.

HOLISTIC WAYS FESTIVAL

24- 25th Nov - Trades Hall of Glasgow | *Tickets £3 upwards.*

DECEMBER

WINTER SOLSTICE CEREMONY AND SOUND BATH

21st Dec - Barcombe Village Hall near Brighton | *Tickets £20.*



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LONG TERM Success

Mark Shields knows that success needs to be sustainable in the long term. Here, he shares the habits and best practice that will help your business thrive...

In this article, I am going to share with you some simple yet effective, success strategies that will ensure your ongoing and continued success as a CAM Practitioner. If you follow these strategies you will achieve what I term successful habits that result in seemingly painless, low effort, ways to ensure a consistent performance in your business.

What do we know about practitioner success?

We have already looked at evidenced research that suggests 50% of practitioners don't go into private practice upon qualifying. We also know the failure rate in the early years in the alternative medicine market is far higher than in general business. Research suggests that just 10% of complementary and alternative medical practitioners practice full time and only a third of this 10% earn a comfortable living. You don't need to be a genius to do the maths.

So the message is clear. Lots of us want to enjoy long term success, but aren't quite getting there. But does it have to be this way? After running a successful Life Coaching Practice for 15 years with a full client book and a four week waiting list, I think not. The secret is in how to ensure your practice is busy, attracting and sustaining quality clients month after month. Consistency and sustainability is key.

When coaching practitioners I have often found they want to be successful and earn a comfortable living but don't know how. Here are my top 5 strategies in attracting quality clients into your practice. As a practitioner you have to adopt a focused, disciplined approach to ensuring your clinic is full.



Five proven success strategies for attracting clients

HOW MANY CLIENTS DO WE NEED?

Decide how much income you want to earn and divide this number by 45 weeks which equates to the actual amount of working weeks allowing for sickness and holiday. Calculate your average client treatment value. Divide your annual income forecast by this average client spend. This will give you the total amount of clients you need to see annually to achieve your earnings target.

Simply by going through this process and forming a written plan will add to your focus and help you attract more clients. Research shows that we have a 33% greater chance of succeeding with our plans if they are written down.

ADOPT A PROFESSIONAL APPROACH

However small you think your business is, ensure you adopt a professional approach and never compromise your image or representation. Remember, "You are what you are perceived to be." Your reputation is the most important thing you have, never compromise it

Make sure you have a professional website. This is your advert to the outside world. Whether you think it or not, if you are going to be a professional practitioner you have to have a professional web presence. If you need help, try Web Healer, which offers a great therapist/practitioner package from £10.00 per month. They are on 08707579878. Also in this day and age, you need to be able to deal with client expectations at all levels. Ensure you have a credit card machine as 78% of clients want to pay in this way. If you can't offer this facility you can't compete. Few people carry cheque books with them and not everyone has cash in hand, especially on a first visit. Offering card payment can remove a potentially awkward situation that may result in an embarrassed client who doesn't come back. You can get a good credit card machine from Card Save for £15.00 per month. They can be contacted on 0844 209150.

Don't advertise your mobile phone number unless your business is mobile and you're always

on the move. A landline is far more professional and gives the impression you are stable and located. Also if you are local, people can't tell from a mobile number.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESSFUL ADVERTISING

Set an advertising budget and ensure you stick to it. As a rule of thumb, set your budget at a maximum of 20% of turnover. You have to speculate to accumulate.

After five years of researching and experimenting with different advertising strategies I have discovered the most successful way to advertise is with Google ad words. By allocating a small budget and cleverly timing your campaign you can turn the tap on to a steady flow of enquiries whenever you want or need to. It's that simple.

My strategy is to start a campaign at four o'clock every day. Your competitors' budgets may well have been used up by this point and you will reach number one on Google at half the normal price. In addition, the evening is the most popular viewing time, so will get double the viewings for half the cost.

OBTAINING REFERRALS

The best business is referred business. Don't be afraid to ask your clients to recommend your services to others. Your competitors will have no such qualms. Ensure you give every new client a business card and leaflet. Leave something visual with them to put on the fridge or in their wallet. You don't want them to forget you.

There are many techniques about asking for referrals. The "specifically for you" technique is as good as any I know and goes a little like this: "As we go through this process together, as it's personal and about you, I'm sure other people will come to mind in a similar situation or with similar needs. Don't worry, when we are finished I will remind you of this and give you some business cards to give them or take their details to contact them" Don't be afraid to ask.

Good clients know its tough out there at the moment and they will help you if they can.

CREATE YOUR OWN PR

The local media businesses like to support local businesses. Approach the local paper for editorial, or the local radio station to give advice on your particular therapy. If you don't ask you don't get. Approach the local gym to put up a poster of what you do, or the local doctors surgery or dentist.

Local community magazines are excellent. It may cost around £20.00 to advertise and reach in excess of 1000 people all living and working within a mile of you. So there you have it; some more coaching tips to help make your business even more successful. Remember the techniques I am sharing with you are modeled on success. They work.

They are currently working for other people, why shouldn't they work for you? ■



If you want to know more about this article, Mark and the CAM COACH team have launched their Online Training Academy for practitioners and further information, courses and free resource is available to help practitioners and therapists. For free entry, please visit

<https://courses.thecamcoach.com/>

Profiting from **CHRISTMAS** AND NEW YEAR

Plan ahead to profit from the peak season for gifting and healthy resolutions...

THE run up to Christmas will see many of us so busy with all that is involved in planning for the festive season, that we forget that this can be one of our most profitable periods. A bit of planning and a little creativity is all it takes...

The average UK household spent £821 on Christmas in 2017. This includes spending on food and travel, but around £2 billion is spent on gifts. There's no reason why your business shouldn't have a share of this, particularly as many people are now keener to spend their budget on experiences rather than things. Experiential gifts are especially popular amongst the 18-44 age group, so consider what might appeal to this demographic. Black Friday, which is fast becoming a UK shopping tradition of deep discounting may also offer an opportunity to acquire more clients, perhaps using Groupon or another discount site, or by posting on local buy and sell Facebook groups.



The run up to Christmas can be hectic and stressful, so consider offering a relaxation package, perhaps combining several restful treatments with a little pampering and a glass of prosecco.

Point of sale ideas

You can only benefit from these seasonal opportunities if you let your clients and potential clients know about them. This may seem blindingly obvious, but it's amazing how often we forget to sell ourselves, or let people know about new products and services. A simple festive poster would help draw attention to the availability of vouchers.

Similarly, if you have a Christmas tree in your reception area, you could tie some blank gift cards to the branches, so that clients may buy a gift voucher for their friends and family. This can work well if the gift voucher is priced at a discount to your normal service charges. The voucher can either be for a set service, such as a back and neck massage, reflexology or a crystal consultation, or be of a set value that can be used against any of your services. A third approach is to create a bespoke experience, perhaps a day or half a day of treatments, with the recipient choosing their preferred treatments from a given selection. This approach can work particularly well in a multi-therapist setting, or where beauty and holistic treatment are offered in the same setting. You might also consider vouchers which offer a treatment to two people, so that couples or friends can spend some time together.

It's best to create vouchers that are time limited, perhaps expiring within a year or six months. In 2014, the UK government reckoned that some £300 million was spent on gift cards each year that were never spent. This is around 6% of all gift cards and vouchers and, while it'd be better to convert a voucher into a loyal customer, unspent vouchers are pure profit.

Vouchers should also look attractive and professional, but there are many free design templates available and printing is inexpensive and quick. You could print these yourself, or use an online printer such as

Vistaprint or Solopress.

Similarly, if you have a small tree on your desk, this can be decorated with mini-crackers. Each of these could contain a special offer designed to build business in the New Year. The exact contents will depend on the nature of your own practice, but some ideas might include a free add on service such as a scalp massage or hand massage with any January or February appointment, trial sizes of your own products with a discount voucher for the full size, or a free session when five are booked and paid for. Small gifts, such as a tumble polished crystal or a mini essential oil room spray could be added if you are feeling generous and have regular high value clients. Neither of these is expensive, and will make clients feel valued.

Make sure you post any special offers online as almost 70% of experiential gifts are purchased this way.

New Year, New You

New Year brings the biggest opportunity for health and wellbeing practitioners. Once the mince pies are finished, almost every adult will be thinking about losing weight, becoming fitter, giving up bad habits and generally looking to improve their own health. That's why slimming clubs and gyms start their press and TV ad campaigns on December 27th. Again, planning ahead will help you grow your business.

This can be the most effective time of year to advertise in the local press or radio station. Be sure to ask if there's an agency discount and don't accept the first price quoted. Ad agencies and media buying companies are often offered a discount of 5-10% on the price of advertising as standard, and if you don't use an agency, you can often have your price reduced accordingly. It never hurts to ask. Small community magazines can represent good value.

Newspapers and local magazines will also be looking for relevant health and wellbeing content in early January, so make enquiries and pitch some ideas to targeted local publications. Editorial coverage lends



authority and costs

nothing, so generate a list of ideas and send off two or three of your strongest ideas to the editor or features editor for consideration. It's best to get in early as someone else may edge you out. Similarly, pitch local radio stations for interview slots or plan a few talks or even an open evening in January to capitalise on the desire for improved health. Make sure you publicise anything you are doing on your social media.

Leaflets are inexpensive and can easily be distributed in your local area. The Royal Mail provides this service, but has a minimum spend of £500. This could reach around 8000 with an expected response rate for direct mail of 1-2%, bringing in 80-160 new clients. This reach and response rate may be too much to cope with and will inevitably generate a lot of junk mail, so it could be worth looking for a local distribution company who will help you with a more localised campaign. An even more tailored and budget-friendly approach is to do it yourself, simply walking round homes in your target areas and leafletting them yourself. As well as providing exercise, it also give you the chance to have conversations with potential clients. You can also create several different leaflet design and discover which is most effective for you.

A few hours exploring your local media options, creating your offers and planning your campaign now, could really pay off in December, January and beyond. ■



Identifying new opportunities for growth is key to the success of every business. How do we find them, and what do we do when we notice them? **Elizabeth Ashley's** here to explain...

LIKE every business, you are carelessly giving away profit and turnover every time somebody walks through the door. These are ways of encouraging your existing and loyal customers to spend a little more every time they engage with you. These opportunities are easy pickings! Little nuggets of cash, they are right under your nose.

In a hairdresser's, for example: Are you giving away customers to competitors who offer Indian Head Massage? Perhaps they are buying their shampoos and conditioners from the supermarket, because your professional brands are too expensive. Perhaps consider offering a mid-budget range to encourage a higher average spend per visit.

Listen To Your Customers

How do we know when we're missing these opportunities? Previously, we may have heard we needed a Unique Selling Point or USP, but we really need a UCP! A Unique Connection Point shows we are listening, understanding, and showing more empathy to people's concerns and needs than other businesses in our area.

SPOTTING

opportunities



Speak to existing customers and lapsed clients to identify what their likes, dislikes and frustrations about your industry are. Take note of frequently asked questions. These can feel repetitive and frustrating, but what you're hearing is a massive opportunity to gain more traction and authority in your field. Allay concerns and solve these issues and you will find you'll turn into a money magnet.

Target competitor business

Never underestimate the potential of someone already proven to spend money on your services. It's far easier to convert a competitor user, or lapsed customer than it ever will be to convert a nonuser. It's a massive mistake to imagine that an untapped market is the place to go. Always look for areas where there is a proven market, but where you could show that you can do something better.

An effective trick is to ask people who else they would recommend. Don't be afraid of asking why people chose someone else's services over yours. Cultivate an open and interested tone of voice, and you'll often find people like to validate their decisions. Use open questions beginning with who, what, why, where, when, how... Where else do you go for treatments? What made you choose them? How did you find out about them? What are your competitors doing that they like or dislike? If there was a way they could improve their service, what would it be? Be brave and ask how you could improve.

Do A SWOT Analysis. List your businesses Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Think about how can you capitalise on threats in other people's businesses? Do they have a beloved therapist going on parental leave? Are there roadworks obstructing their car parking?

Their weaknesses will always form opportunities for you. Likewise, you will have your own in-house strengths. Make sure you're always playing to them. Do you have talents or abilities you're not utilising to their full potential?

Understand trends in your local area

For a long time, no cafés in my town opened until 10 am. Some of my friends often wanted a quick gossip after dropping the kids off at 9:15. The local French restaurant cottoned on to this and started a "Yummy Mummy's Breakfast", full of delicious fresh fruits and pastries from 9 till 11. Consequently, not only is it full at that time, but most of us now treat it as our local after school too, because we've discovered we love their food.

Anyone taking on a role of responsibility will be familiar the sensation of being surrounded by backseat drivers.

Market on service, never on price.

Every business encounters times where business is lean, and it can be extremely tempting to slash prices to snatch other people's takings. This can be an excellent short-term strategy, to draw in new customers or to clear outdated stock, but it is important to always see it as part of a larger overall strategy that can be maintained longer term. Be cautious of bargain hunter customers who only ever look for a bargain, and then move onto the next offering as soon as your offer is over. They have their place if you are willing to show just how much you build into an appointment. What do you do that is different to everybody else? How is your service superior? What is the difference you offer your customer?

Can you accommodate It?

Anyone taking on a role of responsibility will be familiar the sensation of being surrounded by backseat drivers. Everyone has an idea, they can all tell you their way will be best, and things you ought to be doing in your business. There is a great deal of power of listening with just one ear!



Often, their insights are powerful and pertinent, but the time or expenditure required to make it work far outweighs the potential benefits. In fact, the more successful you become, the more opportunities will fall on your feet. The skill of being able to weigh these up becomes key. For example, people often suggest to me to travel around the local libraries offering readings of my books, but since it is unlikely that I will reach several aromatherapists in one sitting, it becomes a labour intensive task with potentially lean results. By contrast, I might be approached to fly halfway across the globe, to give an hour-long lecture to 400 aromatherapists. Reaching such a large proportion of my target audience, virtually guarantees me excellent results. Cash is not the only consideration. If I do a lecture, I feel extremely anxious the whole time. The emotional impact on me and my family is high. So, I deem it too expensive to do more than one of these events a year.

The Pareto Rule

Also known as the 80-20 rule, this concept describes how just 20% of the input into your business will produce 80% of the results. Consequently, making comparatively small tweaks to existing business you can create extremely large outcomes. It makes sense to see how we can make these even better to get even better results. One can apply this to every area of life, and this becomes not only strategic but also an excellent time management tool.

Write a list of your top 10 ideas for the next month. Now prioritise them in terms of effort. Finally, prioritise them in terms of your predicted outcome in terms of results or money. Often, you can see a correlation between two ideas that will take very little time but create enormous results.

Why not make your project this week identifying three opportunities to make your business more profitable? ■



ELIZABETH ASHLEY is the UK Director of National Association

of Holistic Aromatherapists and author of 18 aromatherapy manuals. Her latest book Cannabis is available on Amazon. Discover more about Elizabeth's books and courses at www.thesecretealer.co.uk.

WHY YOU SHOULD SWITCH YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP TO COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



Exclusive Premier Membership Benefits:
(we are a multidisciplinary association)



- access to our fantastic discounted insurance scheme
- free attendance at our Annual Conference (worth 6 CPD points and normal price £55) and annual Awards Ceremony - this year's date 20/10/2018 in Central London
- use of our logo on your marketing materials
- free lapel badge (worth £4)
- 10% discount off Physique therapy products
- 15% off essential oils and aromatherapy supplies at Base Formula
- exclusive therapy illness insurance cover option with PGMutual that also gives you a lump sum on retirement
- free to call from a mobile therapists advice phone line - there is always an experienced therapist to talk to
- free access to CNHC Registration as we are one of the CNHC verification organisations
- use of MCHP after your name
- directory for public referral
- London Special Treatment Licence exemption
- full support in the event of a complaint
- access to benefits and support materials for your practice in the Member Login area of our website
- regular newsletter with up-to-date information on regulation and legislation as part of a free copy of Holistic Therapist Magazine (worth £24 per year),
- discount accountancy scheme for your accounts and tax return
- unlimited expert advice whenever you need it and free reviews of your marketing materials
- discounts on CPD courses from our accredited schools—see our Events page for course dates
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CASE STUDY

Drumming up business

Ali Avery shares how she used a free local business course to make a success of her holistic drumming groups...

I have been a Reiki practitioner for 7 years and have been working for myself for 18 months. I offer Reiki, Reiki drumming, shamanic healing and also run holistic drumming groups for adults and children with learning difficulties. I still can't believe my job is also my passion, it does not feel like going to work at all.

I loved Reiki and wanted to give up my job, but I did not know how to turn my passion into a successful business model. I needed to understand marketing, PR and have a business plan. Like many people who want to work for themselves, I couldn't afford an advisor and didn't think studying business at college would help me get my own ideas off the ground quickly.

I looked around and discovered that The Business Factory in North Shields offered a course called Boost Your Business. This covered all the skills I was looking for and provided start up support. They showed me how to make Reiki healing into a successful business.

There are similar courses run by local enterprise companies all over the country. You have a series of workshops plus access to an advisor. They are almost always provided free of charge, yet contain high quality, relevant advice and your adviser will help you with any problems you encounter.

I learned how to use social media by using effective digital content, how to prepare newsletters content, confident

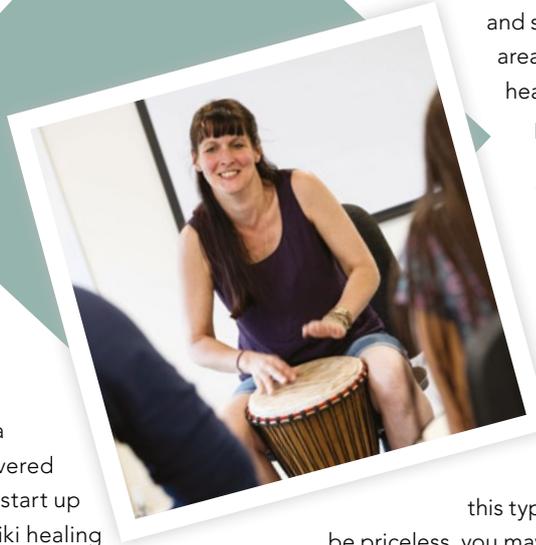
networking, marketing skills and how to plan and deliver an enterprise project using route to market skills. I learned about calculating the cost of delivery, timescale, terms and conditions and, importantly, how to deliver a convincing sales pitch.

The course helped me enormously. I just knew the potential power of the drum and wanted to run several drumming groups for adults with learning difficulties and was confident that my drumming class idea would work. I used route to market skills to help start up my holistic drumming group. Thanks to the training on sales pitches, I was confident in approaching charities and schools with my drumming group. I would have found this difficult before the training course, but I have learned the skills required to bring in customers and to put my business on a sound financial footing.

My confidence has grown so much since the course.

I am now planning a range of drumming and shamanic workshops in the local area. My passion for Reiki and holistic healing is now a business that I am proud of. I'd advise other holistic therapists to choose a similar course in their local area. There are many available and they are welcoming and inclusive. Don't assume they are just for people planning huge engineering or tech businesses. If you want to turn your holistic business into a full time business that will give you a good wage, then you need

this type of course. What you will learn will be priceless, you may even get the chance to give up your day to day job for your passion. After all this is the reason why we are here; to help people heal. ■



i Ali Avery is a busy mum to a 4 year old boy. She describes Reiki as the light in the darkness and says it has helped her heal past trauma and illness. Ali sees her mission to help people heal themselves through holistic therapy. Find out more at www.averysangels.co.uk or e-mail averysangels@hotmail.co.uk.

How to choose the right

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Emma Sargent and Paula MacArthur of Therapy Marketing School are here to help you master social media...

SOCIAL media is a minefield. We all know what it's like to hop onto a social media platform to look something up and find ourselves looking at cute cat videos or clips of Graham Norton's chat show. You suddenly come to, out of a social media trance and realise that an hour and a half has gone by and you've forgotten what you wanted to check in the first place. You may have amused yourself and lifted your spirits, but you've also wasted precious time that you could have spent on the very same platform building your potential client base.

It may be hard to believe, but social media is a goldmine. It has never been easier to reach vast numbers of potential clients and build a following of raving fans without spending a penny. It allows you to have a totally different relationship with prospects. It is, by its very nature, social, which means that you can have conversations, get feedback and really get to know your clients' needs and how to best serve them.

The trick is to navigate your way through and make it work for you rather than against you.

Where to start?

Success comes from being focussed, so our advice is to pick one platform and get good at it. All the platforms have advantages, all are designed to be addictive and all require an investment of time to get results. Tinkering will get you nowhere.

All the normal rules of marketing still apply; you need to be super clear on who specifically your clients are (not "anyone who..."), what specifically you specialise in (the symptoms/pain/issues) and what they will get from seeing you (the outcome).





The most important thing to consider when deciding what platform to use is where those potential clients are. There are 2.2 billion people on Facebook, so the chances are that some of those are your clients! It is still worth researching whether your potential clients are active users. If I was trying to connect with University students I would pick Snapchat, as Facebook has gone out of favour with that age group even though they all have accounts. If I was after corporate clients I would certainly choose LinkedIn, and if I was specialising in helping older people I would use other forms of marketing altogether.

Let's start with Facebook. This is probably the most flexible of the platforms and it is very easy to make a huge difference immediately just with a few small tweaks to your profile. It is the easiest place to search for someone if you want to find out anything about them at all. Your clients may very well search for you on Facebook so it's crucial that you can give the impression you want to give immediately with a good close up smiling profile picture and a way for them to find out about your business immediately they get to your profile. There is no need to 'friend' any clients - in fact we would strongly advise against it - you simply put a link to your business page which is essentially your online shop window.

Your page is the place that you post content, which you must do regularly. Consistency really is the name of the game. It takes time to get traction, and the more time you focus your efforts on one platform, the more likely you are to see results. The downside of Facebook - apart from being sucked

into the 'wasting time' vortex = is that it changes its algorithms frequently, rewarding certain types of behaviour on the platform. It can be a full time job just keeping up with it all! At the moment, and for the foreseeable future, Facebook really wants people to go live; that is, pop up with a live video on your business page which is then shown to your followers. If Facebook deems your content relevant and interesting then it will send it out to people who are like your followers, thereby increasing your followers without you spending anything at all.

Relevant, interesting, and consistent. Those are the three rules of posting content.

How do I turn my followers into clients?

Essentially, we need to build a relationship with our potential clients. They need to get to know us, like us and trust us. We can do that, all within Facebook, by starting a group. If your business page is your shop window then your group is your shop, where you can talk to your potential customers, give them metaphorical glasses of champagne and cake, and show them what is available to buy. We can make any offer we like inside our group, obviously in an elegant way and not too often! As long as you keep providing excellent value and get to know your prospects you can't lose.

Make sure you track the clients who come from social media so that you can measure success. The simplest method is to ask them where they heard about you. That's a good habit to get into however

you market your business. ■

Quick wins: 3 ways to increase your professional visibility on Facebook

1. Create quality images: Create a high quality profile picture (that looks like you!) plus appropriate banner and feature images using a free tool like Canva.
2. Sort out a business page: Set up an optimised business page and plan your strategy so that it makes sense for your business and you don't feel overwhelmed or think you have to spend hours on FB everyday.
3. Sort out some consistent content: Source niche content from Google using Google alerts and free images from sources like Pixabay and Unsplash.



EMMA SARGENT AND PAULA MACARTHUR

are the founders of Therapy Marketing School, a leading resource to help therapists get clients. Find them on Facebook by searching "Thriving Therapists" or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/therapymarketingschool/> and join hundreds of other therapists just like you.

PLATFORM	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A true 'networking' site Can communicate publically or privately in real time Can build community Can form relationships Integrated with Instagram Can link to your services easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time-consuming Strict rules that change frequently
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fastest growing platform Appeals to a wide audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No linking in captions
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to put out content Easy search with hashtags Great way to connect with influencers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of content overwhelming Not visual
YouTube	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still the second largest search engine Non-followers can find your content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires high quality video Less opportunity for relationship

NEW INITIATIVES IN HOLISTIC THERAPY RESEARCH

David Balen, of Balens Specialist Insurance Brokers, shares the latest developments...

NHS care is a huge benefit to society but the inevitable consequence of this 'free' health care, is that many people lose the link between the cost and their paying for it. This creates a barrier for those healthcare choices that are not NHS funded. The average cost of a visit to a GP in 2014 was £45.00 for an 11 minute appointment. In a 2017/18 survey, Balens Specialist Insurance Brokers found that for a similar cost a therapist's client would expect a 30 – 60 minute or longer appointment.

A UK VOICE FOR THERAPISTS

Natural health and wellbeing practitioners are very much disadvantaged by the lack of an overarching umbrella organisation. This makes it almost impossible to counter skeptic lobbying and to promote the ways in which holistic therapists contribute to the improvement of the nation's health.



David Balen

The recent Balens survey of therapists, suggests by extrapolation that there could be in the region of 4 – 500,000 treatments carried out each week by Balens clients alone. When you consider that there are in the region of 67,000 GPs working in the UK today, and that Balens insure over 80,000 clients, most of whom would be classed as natural health and well-being practitioners who do not practice surgery or recommend ethical drugs, it is clear that holistic therapists offer a massive benefit to our national health and wellbeing. As most of this work is local, small-scale and referrals come through recommendation, the benefits offered go largely under the radar of the government and large institutions. Who knows what changes could result, if all the disciplines could unite on the things that connect them rather than divide them?

With one voice, it is easier to effectively reach the media and decision makers in power.

BREXIT, THE EU AND RCTS

One result of Brexit could see the UK's therapists being shielded from potential EU rules and

regulations around Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM). We understand from Seamus Connelly of EFCAM that the EU are looking at regulating the sector. Currently, there are wide variations in the qualifications needed to practice across the EU. In some countries, only medically qualified doctors can practice homeopathy, while in others, two weekend courses make you a fully qualified Shiatsu practitioner. It is easy to see why some form of consistency would be required. Health and wellbeing practitioners must come together so their voice will be loud enough for the community to decide, rather than those who may have other agendas and who will be lobbying hard to get their way.

Unfortunately, huge money is involved in pharmaceuticals and many are heavily invested in viewing randomised control trials (RCTs) as being the 'gold standard' by which to measure any healthcare product. This has had a massive impact on the likes of herbal remedy producers, which are unable to afford the vast costs of 'proving' something works. However, as we know it is being understood more and more that RCTs are very far from perfect and narrow in scope.

Evidence is emerging that gender and circadian rhythms can impact upon the effectiveness of certain drugs. Moreover, drugs are usually tested in isolation, rather than the cocktail that many with long term illness are taking. Perhaps most importantly, RCTs ignore what most who have worked with patients would testify as being key, the therapeutic relationship itself. Therefore making them less than ideal when trying to measure the benefits of natural health and wellbeing treatments which often have a qualitative as well quantifiable effect.



Dr Robert Verkerk

with the greatest or lowest levels of perceived health and wellness. The second function is about 'big data' research. The objective is to look for patterns in the data, to answer big questions such as what combinations of lifestyle and healthcare choices are associated with higher or lower levels of wellness." Balens have commissioned a large international Health Research organisation in the Netherlands and the pilot is in the final stages of development.

Unfortunately, huge money is involved in pharmaceuticals and many are heavily invested in viewing randomised control trials (RCTs) as being the 'gold standard' by which to measure any healthcare product.

BIG DATA RESEARCH AND THE HAWTHORN TRACKER

Big data qualitative outcome based research is a viable alternative to RCTs. They can be patient led, giving them voice and gathering knowledge of how different therapeutic interventions have helped. One such new big data research project is the Hawthorn Health Collaboration. Under my leadership, Balens have funded this project and are working closely with Dr. Robert Verkerk of the Alliance for Natural Health International and several eminent academics.

The Hawthorn Tracker is a new health app that is in the initial stages of being tested. Dr Verkerk explained, "The Hawthorn Tracker has two main functions. Firstly, it is designed to help users to self-monitor their own health journeys to help them understand which combinations of lifestyle choices and healthcare interventions are associated

Perhaps uniquely, the Hawthorn Tracker will include questions relating to which, if any, complementary, natural or alternative health choices the participant is also engaging with, allowing for researchers to gain a much clearer view of the effect these choices have for the individuals concerned – effects on their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. Much effort has been made to avoid bias in the questionnaire, which will help deal with those who may wish to challenge the data and its relevance.

Balens is also actively involved in networking and

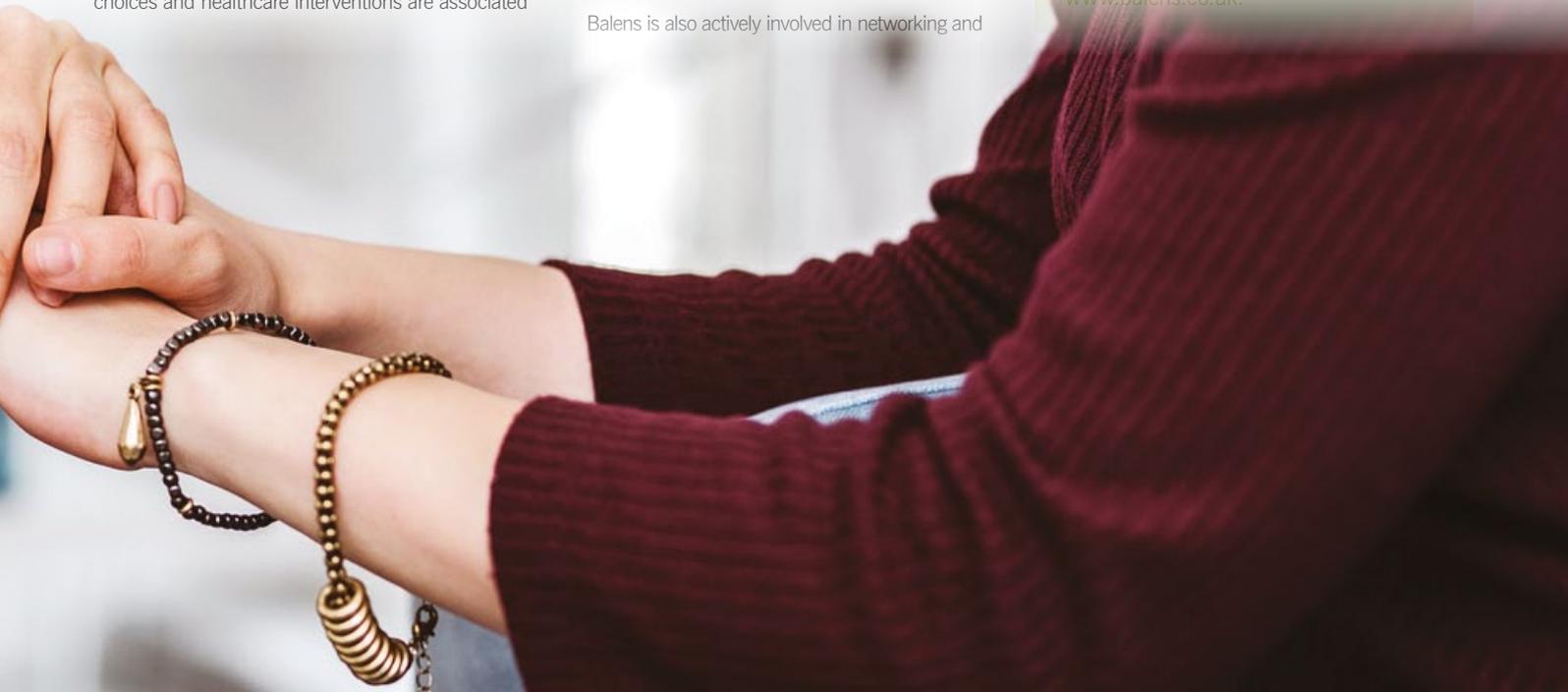
supporting positive initiatives in Natural Medicine as part of its ethical philosophy. One such was the recent New Horizons in Water Science conference. This was held at the Royal College of Medicine, organised by Hon Lord Ken Ward Atherton. The speakers included two Nobel Laureates. Papers included fascinating evidence that suggested, on a sub molecular level, that water has amazing as yet not fully understood properties, including the ability to hold memory. This may go some way towards providing a scientific explanation for homeopathy. In addition, India and Israel are just starting a joint research trial using big data into the benefits of homeopathy. This is just one example of research being carried out globally to lend weight to the benefits of alternatives to the conventional medical route.

Balens, through our extensive network of contacts and connections, will continue to be one of many advocates for the movement. I've been passionate about choice in healthcare for many years. Natural health and complementary and alternative healthcare have been incorporated into my own life since the 1960s. Whilst the Hawthorn Tracker's focus is on the big data research, the Hawthorn Health Collaboration's focus is more on about community cohesion. Helping to facilitate a unified voice for the many hundreds of Associations and many thousands of therapist who work within the UK, and trying to contribute to paradigm change in the thinking and behaviour of future UK Health systems. ■



Further details about the Hawthorn Health collaboration may be found on Balens website 📄

www.balens.co.uk





Introducing flower

Julia Seymour believes that flower essences can add a new dimension to your practice...

FLOWERS are conscious, intelligent forces. Flower essences are a concentrated encapsulation of this life force which we can use in our everyday lives for happiness, emotional wellbeing and healing. Flower essences are tinctures made primarily from flowers, trees and plants, but there are also ranges of environmental, crystal and even animal essences. They are safe to use and are considered suitable for everyone from young children to the elderly.

Herbalism and the use of plants and flowers for healing, has been around for as long as recorded history, but modern-day flower essences were founded by Dr Edward Bach, creator of the Bach Flower Remedies. In 1930, Dr Bach, a medical doctor, decided to search for a new healing technique and spent the spring and summer discovering and preparing new flower remedies which held the pattern of energy of the flower.

Bach's flower remedies were intuitively derived and based on his connection to the plants. If he

felt a negative emotion, he would hold his hand over different plants. If one alleviated the emotion, he would ascribe the power to heal that emotional problem to that plant. He believed that early morning sunlight passing through dew-drops on flower petals transferred the healing power of the flower onto the water, so he would collect the dew drops from the plants and preserve the dew with an equal amount of brandy to produce a mother tincture which would be further diluted before use. Later, he found that the amount of dew he could collect was not sufficient, so he would suspend flowers in spring water and allow the sun's rays to pass through them.



Essences contain the energy signature of the plant or flower and they are still made in a similar way to the method of Dr Bach described above. Typically, flowers or parts of a plant are freshly picked and placed into a crystal bowl of spring water. The bowl is then placed near to the plants being used and ideally

in full sunlight or moonlight. Over time, the energy signature of the plant is transferred to the water and the water starts to show tiny bubbles once this exchange has taken place. Essences from tougher or woodier plants can also be made by boiling parts of the plant in water. Because crystal glass and water are conductors of energy, essences can also be made by placing the crystal bowl next to, or amongst, the plant without any blooms or leaves being added directly to the water. Once the essence is ready, the water is collected, any blooms or leaves are discarded, and the water is mixed with a pure spirit (typically vodka or brandy) for preservation. Flower essences are officially classified as food supplements.

Flower essence producers are nearly always 'called' to make an essence. A flower may strike them as the antithesis of an emotion or situation they would like to heal, or a plant or flower may literally catch their eye or give them a strong feeling or sensation. Whilst making an essence, the producer will sit and tune into the plant and through meditation or intuition, will pick up on the signature or characteristics being offered by the plant.

The Doctrine of Signatures is also an integral part of flower essence therapy. This is the concept that plants are given to us through nature's conscious design to heal body parts which the plant or herbs resemble physically. An example of this is something like walnuts being good for the brain based on the

essences

similarity in appearance. The plant's shape, colour, smell, taste and growth patterns can all give clues to its healing use both physically and emotionally.

Essential oils are very different to essences. Pure essential oils are extracted from plants through steam distillation. Freshly picked plants are suspended over boiling water, and the steam pulls the oil out of the plant and since water and oil does not mix, the two separate and the essential oil is collected.

Flower essences are tools for transformation, catalysts for change. They offer emotional balance and harmony by enhancing the positive aspects of the qualities of mind, emotion and personality. By providing a person with positive qualities, the negative or neutral aspects are dissolved and balance is restored. Flower essences bring us back into harmony. Essences help us to release negative emotional and behavioural patterns that may be blocking our emotional and spiritual growth.

The tincture – the water containing the essence, combined with alcohol as a preservative – can be taken as drops under

the tongue or added to a bottle or glass of water to sip throughout the day. Because they work energetically, flower essences make beautiful aura sprays and the mists can also be used to clear rooms and physical spaces. Mists are made by combining essences with spring water and essential oils.

Essences can be taken singly or combined.

Practitioners can select essences through their in-depth knowledge of particular ranges, or can select essences intuitively (through instinct or dowsing). Essence producers usually provide a photograph of the plant/flower and a full description of its qualities and attributes. Many ranges also sell a deck of insight cards as an additional tool to choose remedies. Even complete newcomers to essences are often wonderfully surprised at how well they are able to intuitively select the perfect essence for their situation just by looking at the photographs and seeing which one jumps out!

Essences can be added into creams and lotions very easily. This is also the best way to offer them to patients who may wish to avoid ingesting alcohol. Simply add a few drops into a base lotion and apply during a

treatment. Alternatively, add the drops to face or body cream for daily use.

The British Flower & Vibrational Essences Association (BFVEA) contains a wealth of research and information about the various UK essence ranges and also a member directory, where you can find details of registered practitioners. Their website also lists accredited training courses where you can learn about various ranges and producers and how to make essences of your own. The Bach Centre in Oxfordshire offers training on the Bach Remedies.

Flower essences are wonderful tools for emotional well-being. Their energy is light and refined and their effects can be gentle, yet effective. The biggest benefit of using flower essences is that they reconnect you to plants and nature, something that is essential for all of us at this time in our planet's history. ■



Julia Seymour is a mindset coach, a flower essences

producer and practitioner and a creative working with natural materials. She works with clients globally and hosts international speaker summits. Her Mother Tree Essences range will be launched this winter. Visit www.juliaseymour.com for further details.



CELEBRATING LOCAL CHAMPIONS

Michael Watson CHNC Chair, discusses the organisation's Local Champions programme...

THE CNHC Local Champions Programme started back in 2012 after the Accredited Register scheme was developed. Maintaining standards is at the heart of what we do and helps uphold our status as an Accredited Register with the Professional Standards Authority. CNHC registrants involved in the Local Champions programme understand how important it is to uphold standards across the industry and kindly volunteer their time, with the aim of raising the public awareness of CNHC.

The network is currently made up of nearly 50 CNHC registrants spread throughout the UK, with practitioners in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. New volunteers receive a welcome pack including briefing notes on CNHC, marketing tips and a press release, plus CNHC posters and leaflets to get started. We also support them by running campaigns during awareness months,

send email updates and keep in touch on our Facebook group.

It is now seven years since the programme started and we have a strong core of CNHC Local Champions who have been with us since the beginning, plus some new recruits that are eager to spread the word. Here, they share their experiences as practitioners, and how the Local Champions programme has helped them reach out to their community, grow their business and stand up for standards across the industry.



SARAH BRYAN: SUCCESS APPROACHING THE NHS AS A CNHC REGISTRANT

Approaching GP surgeries can seem daunting, but not for CNHC Local Champion Sarah Bryan. Sarah is a CNHC registered aromatherapist and massage therapist in Exeter who has been working hard to gain access to her local GP surgeries. This can be challenging, and the willingness to discuss

complementary therapies among surgeries varies widely across the country.

Sarah recently held a successful talk at a local GP surgery speaking to a room of GPs, nurses and admin staff. She opened with a few success stories, discussed the role of CNHC and then took a volunteer from the group and performed a postural assessment and myofascial release technique. She then invited the GPs to feel the difference between the treated and untreated shoulder – which was very popular with the audience!

It is now seven years since the programme started and we have a strong core of CNHC Local Champions who have been with us since the beginning, plus some new recruits that are eager to spread the word.

Sarah was able to get her foot in the door at this local GP surgery as she is registered with CNHC and she was persistent with following up. As CNHC registration is often required for complementary therapists to hold posts within the NHS, this gave confidence to the Practice Manager and GPs at the practice.

FIONA HUTCHINSON: GIVING THE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE AND BUILDING YOUR PRACTICE IN A NEW AREA

Many of you may have found yourself relocating your family and your practice to a new area. This is not only a big move for a family, but also for a business. CNHC Local Champion and registered massage therapist, Fiona Hutchinson, recently relocated from North London to Harrogate, Yorkshire. Fiona knew she needed to market herself effectively and quickly to build up a new base of clients and knew her CNHC registration would give confidence to the public in her new location.

She tried various different marketing strategies and tactics, while learning and growing along the way. Below are some tips from her experience:

- Go to networking groups – try several to find the right fit for you
- Social Media – can be very time consuming, so stick with one or two platforms and do them well

- Facebook advertising – it does help generate new clients, but if you don't know your target audience or client type, do some research / testing beforehand
- Ask for Google reviews – these can help make your website more visible as Google like to know that you are recommended

Once she was settled in her new area she reached out to CNHC to become a Local Champion. Her experience of marketing locally gave her a great foundation to spread the word about us and to step up as a Local Champion.

ANGELA BURKE: GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY WHILE STANDING UP FOR STANDARDS

Another way our Local Champions have raised awareness locally is by volunteering their time or services within their community or with a local charity. Take Angela Burke, who is CNHC registered for healing, and is based in Ireland. She offers a healing clinic open to the public the first Friday of every month, available on a donation basis which all goes to charity. As part of her work, Angela teaches healing. On these open days, her students get the opportunity to engage with the public and when they give their consent, to practise under supervision. Angela's CNHC registration not only gives her students confidence, but also the public she reaches with her free healing clinic.

SUSAN WATSON: SUPPORTING PAIN ELIMINATION DAY

Then there is Susan Watson, CNHC registered hypnotherapist, who is supporting the organiser of Pain Elimination Day on 14th September. Susan recently became a Local Champion to raise awareness about CNHC in her area. Becoming part of this event has provided her with a platform to engage with other practitioners across the country. Currently there are 80 other therapists taking part in the day, with all proceeds going to UNICEF. If you are interested in learning more or participating in the event next year please visit: <https://m.facebook.com/groups/440604573065961> and click 'Join Group' at the bottom of the page. If you are registered with CNHC and are interested in becoming a Local Champion, please email us at info@cnhc.org.uk ■



CNHC is the only organisation that was set up with government support to hold a UK-wide register of complementary health practitioners. Appearing on CNHC's Accredited Register demonstrates your commitment to standards. To find out more about CNHC please visit our website: www.cnhc.org.uk or call **020 3668 0406**. You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.



NEW FRONTIERS:

RESEARCH ROUND UP

The latest chronic pain research likely to be of interest to holistic therapists, straight from scientific journals...

MEDICAL CANNABIS IS EFFECTIVE IN TREATING A WIDE RANGE OF HEALTH CONDITIONS

Researchers at The University of New Mexico have found that medical cannabis provides immediate symptom relief across dozens of health symptoms with relatively minimal negative side effects.

In two recent studies the research team reported that patients experienced statistically and clinically significant therapeutic benefits when they used cannabis for symptoms ranging from chronic pain to insomnia. Both studies analysed data collected with the Releaf App which has almost 100,000 records of user sessions.

"If the results found in our studies can be extrapolated to the general population, cannabis could systematically replace multi-billion dollar medication industries around the world. It is likely already beginning to do so," commented one researcher.

Users with 27 different health conditions averaged almost a four point improvement on a 1-10 measurement scale after taking the drug. Medical cannabis is rapidly gaining popularity particularly amongst older people and patients with significant health conditions.

More than 94 percent of cannabis users reported symptom intensity reductions following self-administered cannabis use. This may reflect the ability of the plant's phytocannabinoids to influence the human endocannabinoid system, which regulates both mental and physical health and behavioural systems.

According to the endocannabinoid deficiency theory, many mental and physical health disturbances result from the dysregulation of the body's innate endocannabinoid system (ECS), often described as a master network of chemical

signals that promote physical and psychological homeostasis, or biological state-efficiency. *Ref: 10.3390/medicines5030075*

MENTAL IMAGERY MANAGES PAIN INDEPENDENT OF OPIOID SYSTEM

Mentally reframing pain as a pleasant experience is an effective regulation strategy that acts independently of the opioid system, according to a new study human research published in *JNeurosci*. The study supports clinical use of mental imagery techniques, such as imagining a new context or consequence of a painful event, in conjunction with pain-relieving drugs.

Chantal Berna, Siri Leknes and colleagues tested two approaches toward modulating pain perception. For a mental imagery task, healthy men and women were instructed to imagine individually calibrated heat pain applied to their forearm as a pleasant experience, for example by thinking about warming up by a fire after coming in from the cold. A relative relief task used visual cues to manipulate participants' expectations about the forthcoming heat pain. Although both tasks made the pain experience more pleasant, only the effects of the relative relief task were blocked by naloxone -- the life-saving drug used to treat opioid overdose. Mental imagery was unaffected by naloxone,

indicating that this approach works through opioid-independent mechanisms. *Ref: 10.1523/JNEUROSCI.0854-18.2018*

MRI IMAGING SHOWS 'MINDFUL PEOPLE' FEEL LESS PAIN

A study conducted at Wake Forest School of Medicine suggests that mindful people experience less pain. "Mindfulness is related to being aware of the present moment without too much emotional reaction or judgment," said the study's lead author, Fadel Zeidan, Ph.D. "We now know that some people are more mindful than others and those people seemingly feel less pain."

The study demonstrated that people with higher mindfulness ratings had less activation in the central nodes (posterior cingulate cortex) of the default network and experienced less pain. Those with lower mindfulness ratings had greater activation of this part of the brain and also felt more pain, Zeidan said. "Based on our earlier research, we know we can increase mindfulness through relatively short periods of mindfulness meditation training, so this may prove to be an effective way to provide pain relief for the millions of people suffering from chronic pain." *Ref: 10.1097/j.pain.0000000000001344* ■



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CASE STUDY

Setting up a social enterprise

Caroline Barrow, of the Upledger Institute, discusses creating a social enterprise to offer intensive Craniosacral Therapy programmes to those with PTSD...

Intensive programmes using CranioSacral Therapy (CST) were first developed in the USA, by the Upledger Institute, back in the 1990s. Two to four therapists treat a group of six to twelve participants for five days, all in the same room. It's such an incredible experience for participants and therapists alike that we have been keen to bring intensive programmes to the UK.

The intensive programmes are designed for those with severe trauma, such as Vietnam veterans with PTSD. They were soon attended by those with a huge array of physical and emotional healthcare challenges and, more recently, athletes suffering from post concussion injuries. Our next programme is in November 2018.

CranioSacral Therapy, with its roots in osteopathy, holds that the body is one unit and you cannot affect one part without having an impact on others. We also believe that our bodies have an incredible ability to self-correct. Sometimes a little support is what the body needs to begin to release parts of our trauma and reignite our ability to heal.

The intensive programme

On our IP we had six clients suffering with PTSD, typically from a series of incidents and exposure to situations many of us would

find beyond daunting. Five had been retired from the police force because of their illness, one was ex-military.

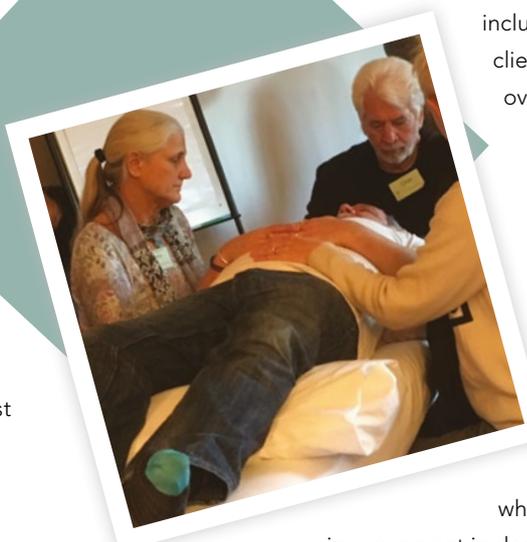
We also had six lead therapists and twelve support therapists, enabling three therapists to work with each client during all the therapy times. These teams changed each day. Each morning started with a group meeting for clients to share anything relevant for them – or not, if they prefer. The rest of the morning and after lunch is CST – the clients determine the break times. After the clients leave, the therapists have a meeting to catch up. We did this for five days with all the sessions in the same room. The clients also have their own break out room that therapists are not allowed into.

Measuring and recording outcomes of the intensive programme

We measured a number of symptoms including PTSD, depression, insomnia and client-nominated symptoms via MYMOP over the week, as well as pain levels before and after each day's therapy. These were also measured after one, three and six months after the end of the programme.

The average change on the PTSD scale from initial measures to 6 months was 18.3. The developers of the scale state that a change of 5-10 is reliable while 10-20 is clinically meaningful. The improvement in depression scores moved all of them down two categories of depression and two of the participants were no longer categorised as depressed – averages were 19.3 down to 9, on a scale where the minimal clinically important difference is a change of 5. Improvements in insomnia were also notable – 3 were significant improvements, 3 were lower to begin with as this was not one of their key symptoms.

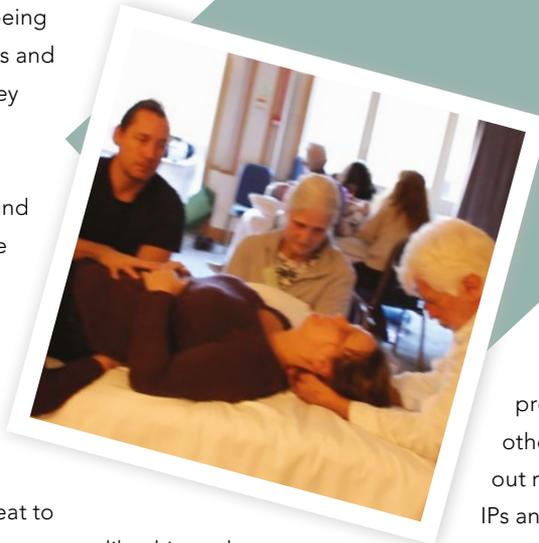
We were quite blown away by these results. The participants had many things to say both during and after the programme





– noting how it changed their outlook on life, reduced physical and emotional pain and improved their ability to connect with others – starting with each other. They are all still in contact. One recently sent us a tear-jerking email listing just some of the things that have changed in their life including being able to hug their kids and others and going out to eat with family. They summed up by saying:

“Clinical assessment is all well and good, but it does not reflect the real changes that have affected my quality of life. I still get symptomatic, but all those changes help me cope and have maybe saved my life.”



Such outcome measures are great to have and build on. To prove programmes like this work we would need to run a parallel study that does sham treatment for a similar amount of time, with the clients not knowing which is which. We are still wondering if that would even be possible! In the meantime however, the results are compelling enough to try to find ways – and funding – to offer more programmes to those in need as they can have a big impact on people who have often run out of options.

Why we chose to set up a Community Incorporated Company

To run these programmes, we set up a social enterprise. We initially planned a charity but decided, on advice of an experienced friend and colleague, to use this newer CIC format instead. A Community Incorporated Company is profit making but not profit taking. All profits are reinvested back into the business. We want this to be a long term, sustainable project, and the social enterprise offers a business model that gives more flexibility all round. While so far the bulk of our funding has come directly from our own CST community and we lose out on the Gift Aid that a charity would receive, we realised that funding will eventually come from a variety of sources and we wanted some flexibility in governance built in to allow us to grow.

Our sister organisation in the US which is called the Upledger Foundation. We initially wanted to call our social enterprise The Upledger Foundation UK. Luckily we spotted the issue with the acronym just in time! We weren't allowed to call it a Foundation anyway as we didn't have a large pot of money, so we settled on Upledger Community Programmes or UP for short.

The aims of our social enterprise

Upledger Community Programmes has three initial aims. We want to run two to four intensive programmes a year within 5 years; we want to fund Therapist in Residence programmes for specific groups who would not otherwise have access to CST; and we intend to carry out research, starting with outcome measures for the IPs and other programmes, We are spurred on by our US colleagues who have published a paper on using CST in the Intensive programmes for concussion*.

There is a challenge in balancing the time needed to build our social enterprise, with our own businesses and practices too, yet we have much to gain personally, professionally and as therapists we love to work multi-handed. It reminds us that there truly is love and healing in the world.

* Wetzler, Gail et al. “CranioSacral Therapy and Visceral Manipulation: A New Treatment Intervention for Concussion Recovery.” *Medical Acupuncture* 29.4 (2017): 239–248. PMC. Web. 22 Aug. 2018. ■



CAROLINE BARROW is a co-director of Upledger Community Programmes CIC. Find out more about the CIC at www.upledgerprogrammes.org.uk. She also runs the Upledger Institute UK, providing CST training, and the College of Body Science, teaching advanced anatomy for CAM therapists. Contact her on 0800 690 6966 or via www.upledger.co.uk or www.collegeofbodyscience.com

CASE STUDY

Losing touch

Ryan Mizzen and Rebekka Mikkola share why increasing levels of loneliness and touch deprivation may represent an opportunity for holistic therapists...

Touch deprivation is a condition that affects people who have very little or no physical contact with others. Touch deprivation is becoming more prevalent as we shy away from the physical interactions which are essential for our emotional and physical wellbeing.

In the UK, an estimated nine million people suffer from loneliness. Many people simply don't have the opportunity to receive platonic touch. We've seen a dramatic rise in the use of technology and mobile devices. These isolate people, even when they're together and meant to be sharing experiences. We've all seen couples in restaurants ignoring each other while gazing at their phones. In addition, there are increasing fears around accusations of harassment, meaning that men, in particular, are far more wary about touching other people.

The effects of touch deprivation

Touch is a basic human need. It improves our immune system, decreases our heart rate, blood pressure and stress levels. When people are deprived of touch, there can be widespread negative impacts:

Aggressive behaviour – Tiffany Field is the founder of the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami's School of Medicine. She led a study looking at French and American adolescents, which found that the American adolescents spent less time touching and hugging their peers than their French counterparts. As such, the American adolescents displayed more self-touch as well as verbal and physical aggressive behaviour.

However, in separate research it was shown that massage therapy proved effective in decreasing aggressive behaviour and increasing empathy amongst violent adolescents.

Body image issues – touch can play a role in the formation of body image issues. According to research findings published by the Journal of Psychosomatic Research, it was found that women who had anorexia and bulimia reported higher levels of touch deprivation. On the other hand, it's also been suggested that overeating could be a way of trying to fill an inner void that has come about from a lack of affection.

High stress levels – hugs and massages help to reduce cortisol and blood pressure levels, which therefore reduce stress. Conversely, when individuals experience stress over long periods of time and lack human touch, they may struggle to relax.

Loneliness – if an individual finds themselves clinging to pillows and pets, this could indicate that they are experiencing loneliness as a symptom of touch deprivation. Another indicator could be prolonged hot showers and baths, which a person could be using as a substitute for the warmth that they would normally receive from someone else.

Mental health issues – depression, low mood, anxiety and being withdrawn could be signs of a lack of tactile nurturance and affection.

Poor immune system – stress hormones destroy immune cells. These immune cells are essential for killing bacterial, viral and cancer cells in our bodies. However, touch lowers our stress hormones, which can therefore help reduce our risk of illness.

A complex issue

The people most commonly affected by touch deprivation include the elderly and those living on their own. However, the picture is a bit more complex as there are also rising rates of loneliness amongst younger people, who are absorbed by their technology.



At Nordic Cuddle, we've seen clients suffering from touch deprivation who aren't even aware the condition exists. For example, people working in senior and managerial positions often deal with high levels of stress and very long working days. They may have next to no platonic touch in their lives. We believe that touch deprivation affects a far greater cross-section of society than we might realise.

An opportunity for holistic therapists

For touch practitioners, there is a clear opportunity to improve the wellbeing of those suffering from touch deprivation, while also building your client base. Conversations within your professional circle about touch deprivation are a great way to get started, as this may identify a few potential clients. The next step is to pinpoint how your specific services can help those who are deprived of touch, and then market them accordingly.

In terms of marketing, it might be worthwhile to first talk about the signs of touch deprivation, before explaining the solutions you provide. This could be done through your blog, social media channels or at wellbeing events. People are sometimes scared to reach out to close family and friends, to let them know that they lack touch and that's one of the reasons why cuddle therapy exists today. So by raising awareness about the problem, there's a greater chance you'll be able to find and help these clients.

At Nordic Cuddle, it became apparent that a large number of our clients were touch deprived, which changed the way we thought about our marketing and who we aimed our services at. To gain a clearer picture, we asked clients why they wanted to try cuddle therapy and what they hoped to gain from it. The feedback we received showed that time after time, clients were suffering from one or more signs of touch deprivation. It wasn't uncommon to find clients who hadn't received touch in decades. Since starting cuddle therapy, these clients have observed that they've become calmer, more relaxed and happier overall.

The first step towards helping individuals suffering from touch deprivation is by making people aware that the condition exists. Initially, we focused on identifying touch deprived clients by addressing loneliness. We wrote an article for the Age UK blog, which created a conversation about the lack of platonic touch available to the elderly. This was followed by an interview with one of the largest media broadcasters in the world about loneliness, which then led to a feature in a TV documentary for ARTE.

With awareness increasing, we could be more specific and started talking about touch deprivation on our website and on social media. We also produced marketing materials to provide to individuals at wellbeing events, which gave us an opportunity

to discuss the work we do and how people can benefit from it.

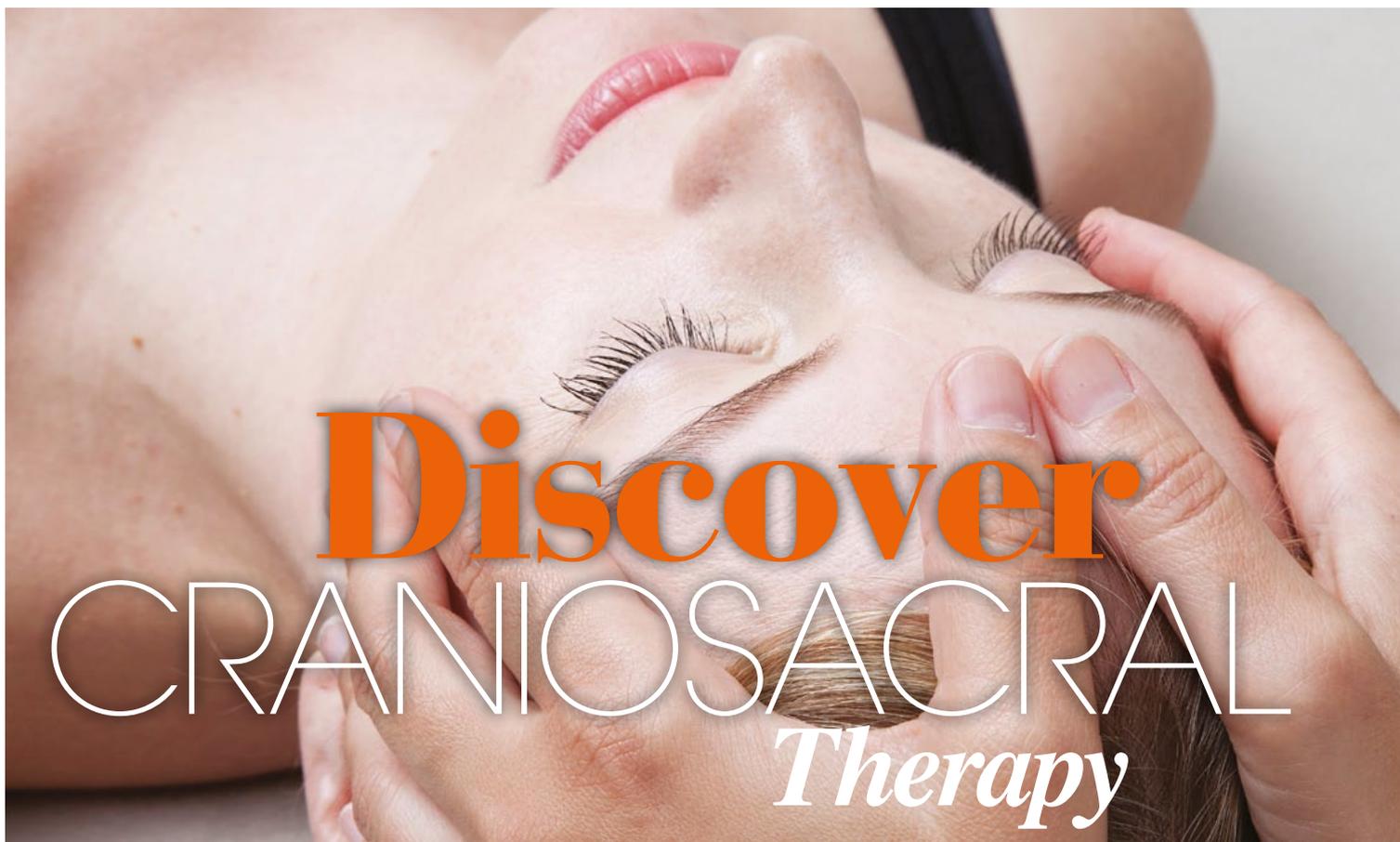
This combination of methods helped us reach a wider audience and has given us the opportunity to help individuals as young as 19 years old, all the way through to elderly people in their 70s who haven't received touch for long periods of time.

If you're a therapist who doesn't practice touch, you could refer touch deprived clients to a cuddle therapist, massage therapist or any other therapy involving touch. If they can't afford these options, then you could enquire whether their friends or family might be a viable option. In regards to self-help, Tiffany Field suggests brushing yourself in the shower, using a massage ball to rub your limbs, doing yoga or walking, all of which can help stimulate the pressure receptors under the skin.

Touch is crucial to our wellbeing and we should do all we can to help others receive the touch they need to live a happy and healthy life. ■

Find out more

Ryan Mizzen is the Director of Content at Nordic Cuddle. Rebekka Mikkola is a certified cuddle therapist and massage therapist, who is also the founder of Nordic Cuddle. To learn more about cuddle therapy, please visit Nordic Cuddle's website: www.nordiccuddle.com



Beatrice Double, PR Chair of the Craniosacral Therapy Association, introduces this gentle technique...

CRANIOSACRAL Therapy is a light touch therapy that works to release restrictions and old patterns held within the client's system that may be preventing optimal health. It is sometimes referred to as the *crème de la crème* of therapies as it works on every level - physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. It can enable the client to access very deep parts of themselves. It can be an intuitive work, which is often most effective when the client is engaged with the process and they will usually leave the session feeling heard in ways that are rarely achieved with other therapies.

Craniosacral Therapy has its roots in the work of William Garner Sutherland, who in the early

1900s, observed the cranial bones had a very subtle motion and that the cerebrospinal fluid that bathes our brains and nervous systems has its own pulse, and is essential to maintaining our health. John Upledger went on to develop techniques for working with these pulses and coined the term 'craniosacral system'. Modern Craniosacral Therapists work with releasing stored tension, stresses and traumas from the client's system as a whole.

During a treatment, a case history is taken and the therapist will usually treat you on a massage table or chair fully clothed. Gentle hand-holds are carried out on the body as the therapist 'palpates' the client's system. Sensations such as heat, cold, tingling or gentle movements may

be felt by the client as the body responds to the therapist's touch. All therapists work differently, generally using a variety of light-touch hand-holds on the body and the skull, although more manipulative techniques may be used. They may pick up tension, restrictions or distortions in the client's physical and emotional systems, all of which may be indicative of ill health or a lack of well-being. These restrictions are gently helped to release, allowing the body to find its way back to wholeness, balance and its potential for full health.

Craniosacral Therapy can work well for people suffering from stress, but it is also very much used for a range of acute and chronic physical issues. Modern day stresses and hectic lifestyles mean that we burn ourselves out quickly and our emotional and physical health become compromised. We may be triggered into a fight or flight stress response more often than we think.

have regular sessions for maintenance or to avoid getting to the point of feeling overwhelmed and stressed in the first place.



Parts of the body contract as we adopt defensive postures, our breathing gets quicker and our digestive systems shut down. Our immune systems also become compromised and we struggle to think clearly when in survival mode. CST can help us shift into a more relaxed state of being where we can start to function more optimally on every level.

Different people make use of Craniosacral Therapy in different ways. Craniosacral Therapy is suitable for all ages from babies to the elderly due to its gentle nature and profound effects. It's used by all sorts of people: celebrities, lawyers, actors, bankers, NHS staff, athletes, children, babies and the elderly all enjoy the effects of Craniosacral Therapy. A course of treatments may be needed depending on the client's condition. Many people also choose to

The cost of a session varies greatly, but is usually between £40-£150 depending on where you go and who treats you. There are several clinics and colleges that offer low-cost treatments from new graduates or those who are close to qualifying and are under supervision. Craniosacral Therapy can work well with many other therapies due to its gentle and non-intrusive nature. Homeopathy, reflexology, acupuncture, psychotherapy and physiotherapy are just some of the therapies people often combine together with CST.

Modern day stresses and hectic lifestyles mean that we burn ourselves out quickly and our emotional and physical health become compromised. We may be triggered into a fight or flight stress response more often than we think.

There are about 500 Craniosacral Therapy practitioners registered with the Craniosacral Therapy Association, and many more who are accredited with other bodies, such as the Upledger Institute. The CSTA is the largest professional body for craniosacral therapists in the UK and regulates colleges and upholds high standards for its practitioner members, who have to keep up-to-date with continued professional development and receive supervision. The CSTA also produces leading research to develop the therapy and inform members of the public and our members. A register of accredited therapists can be found at www.craniosacral.co.uk.

If you're thinking of studying Craniosacral Therapy, there are several different colleges offering various types of training in the UK. It's worth investigating what each college offers, the length of study and experience of the tutors. Most colleges offer open days to give you a taster of what's on offer. Find a course that suits your schedule and resonates with your needs. Make sure your college is accredited with the CSTA.

Craniosacral Therapy is rapidly gaining popularity and becoming a go-to therapy for those who are looking for an alternative to conventional treatment, rather than being regarded as a last resort. Not only have we seen an increase in people requesting the therapy and searching our register for local therapists in recent years, but more people are training as Craniosacral Therapists and more colleges are opening up around the world. To increase this awareness, we're currently preparing for Craniosacral Therapy Awareness Week which will aim to achieve a greater understanding of the therapy and its far-reaching benefits, and it will be running in October 2018. ■



Beatrice Double is PR Chair of the Craniosacral Therapy Association and studied at the College of Craniosacral Therapy. She is an experienced therapist with her own practice at locations across London. Visit www.beatricedouble.com for more information.



Attracting abundance

Sarah Williams offers an abundance ceremony to help you manifest your desires...

AUTUMN is a time of harvest. Whatever seeds have been sown are now ready to be gathered. Conversely, in the Southern hemisphere, new life begins. Wherever we are located, the season allows us to manifest easily now and so we must monitor our seed thoughts very carefully. We are magnets, attracting in whatever we choose.

Whatever we visualise, we manifest into our awareness very quickly. I can have whatever I put my attention into. You can do this too. This also means that when we visualise poverty in some area, we inevitably attract it. So it makes sense to plant thoughts of abundance and focus on this instead. Seek love, passion, money, good health, helpful relationships with family and friends. Think of manifesting as being like the cookies on a website. Whenever you put a thought out there via your devices, somehow you suddenly get a wave of targeted adverts.

Manifesting abundance ceremony

1. I light a candle and welcome in my guides and angels of Light.
2. I look to the south, visualise serpent energy, shedding of old outdated versions of me and feeling rebirth and evolution as I connect to my base chakra.
3. I turn to the west and visualise jaguar, the healing of early life wounds and patterns and focus on my sacral chakra.
4. I turn to the north and welcome in my ancestors and wisdom. I visualise a beautiful hummingbird and connect to my solar plexus chakra.
5. I turn to the east and focus on a magnificent eagle, a new dawn, new beginnings and my heart chakra.

6. I touch the earth and connect with the nurturing energy of Mother Nature and unconditional love.
7. I reach to the sky and connect my thoughts to the solar energy of our sun and the life giving properties on the Father source providing the light we all need to grow.

Then I see myself abundant in whatever I desire, allowing nothing to stop me and asking the Universe for any miracles then letting go of anything that may prevent this from being in my awareness/life. I embody how it feels to already have this in my awareness and trust that it will all be delivered in a perfect sequence and at the perfect point for me. I let go of the need to control the process. Simply "let go and Let God". I am reminded to get out of my own way which happens when I have any negative thoughts. This is often the trickiest part! Then I sit with these abundant feelings for a moment and gaze gently at the candle before thanking the energies of the four directions, Mother Earth and Father Sky, by facing and acknowledging each in turn just as I did when opening the space. Then I blow out the candle and get on with my day. ■



SARAH WILLIAMS is a mother, a therapist, healer, teacher and wellness advocate. She offers Raise your Vibration courses and created the aromatherapy based Soul Harmony healing creams which have helped 1000s of people globally. She also shares the sacred and transformative Rites of the Munay Ki enabling you to dream your world into being. Visit her website www.organic-aromatherapy.co.uk

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OVERSTEPPING THE **boundaries**

There must be a personal boundary between client and therapist. Jade Saffer discusses what happens when we get too involved...

AS therapists, most of us have the innate desire to help others in need. For me personally, the experiences I went through in my younger years were the catalyst for me deciding to train as a therapist and mentor for young people. I grew up tormented by my own negative thoughts, so I am extremely passionate about helping other young people find their own feeling of freedom. This desire to help can strengthen client-therapist relationships, building trust and rapport. Clients can often feel this energy and this can aid comfortability and create a safe space to grow from. When does this energy become unhelpful to the client? When do we know that we have become too involved?

Establishing a set of rules and guidelines is paramount at the start of any therapeutic relationship as it sets the tone and reminds the client of what is expected of them and of the therapist. This is also a tool that we as therapists can use privately. Having

our own protocol to adhere to can provide us with an ethical framework that can prevent us from straying from our professional selves. This can include what we will and will not share with a client about our personal lives, how and when we contact a client outside of a session and what to do if we recognise an inappropriate attachment from either ourselves or the client. Therapists are empathetic which helps us on our therapeutic journeys, but for the mutual benefit of both client and therapist, we must acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries.

Once we have established both our therapeutic guidelines and our own professional framework. We can then use this to refer to should things start to stray. There are certain things we can look for to avoid this, such as frequently thinking about a client out of the context of your therapeutic relationship, sharing personal information with a client, feeling defensive or secretive when questioned about your relationship with a client or maintaining treatment with a client longer than is needed. If any of

these issues or anything else in your professional framework becomes apparent then it is crucial to re-establish and correct these infractions immediately. It is our responsibility as therapists to keep up this awareness and revert back to our professional boundaries whenever necessary.

Documentation of the whole therapeutic relationship can act as a safe and structured framework to protect both ourselves and the client and helps us to see when and where the relationship has started to stray. It is our duty to ensure the client is not mentally emotionally or physically adversely affected by our doing. However, if the therapeutic relationship cannot recover, to respectfully refer the client onto a more appropriate and relevant practitioner. ■

In a nutshell, to prevent crossing our professional boundary remember to:

- Establish clear agreements with your client about your role as a therapist and their role as the client.
- When boundary issues or warning signs appear – address these issues immediately.
- Only disclose information that is related to the client's goals.
- Use supervision as a soundboard for questioning the therapeutic relationship and keeping an awareness of progression.



Jade Saffer is a Holistic Teen

Coach, providing mentoring and therapy for young people aged 11-25. She also offers parental support and facilitates school workshops. Her vision is to foster a desire in her clients for personal and professional excellence through education, communication and therapy. 📍

www.theholisticteencoach.com



Time Out

*The Federation of Holistic Therapists' registrar and compliance manager **Julie McFadden** looks at taking time out from practice to look after your own health...*

AS therapists, our job is to support the health and wellbeing of our clients. Have you ever considered what you would do if you were unable to work due to an injury or health issue that affected you personally? As a professional therapist, particularly if you are self-employed, you must think about what would be best for both you and your clients in such circumstances.

Reduce the risk

We all know that prevention is better than cure. Walk the talk you give your clients and make sure you eat properly, exercise regularly, sleep well and relax, to stay in optimum health. Where possible, alternate your treatments during the course of the day, to reduce the risk of aches and pains from repetitive movements. Take time to stretch your muscles and mobilise your joints between appointments. You could also consider doing some training to learn how to improve your posture and use other body parts when delivering treatments. In winter, wiping surfaces, such as door handles and your massage table with an antibacterial spray can lessen the chances of catching cold and sniffles from clients.

Recovery time

If you have suffered an injury or have been poorly, be sure you seek appropriate treatment and give yourself ample time to recover. Going back to work too soon can just mean more time off work in the long run and you might also put your clients at risk if you are infectious. This is worth bearing in mind if you work with people who are very young, elderly or have a weak immune system.

Pregnant pause

If you become pregnant, you will need to reassess any risks your therapy work might present to

you and your unborn child. Do you work long days, providing physically demanding, full-body treatments? Or perhaps you're an aromatherapist, working with essential oils that are contraindicated in pregnancy? Of course, every person and every pregnancy is different, so talk to your doctor or midwife if you have any queries or concerns.

Finding an alternative

If an injury, illness or other health issue does prevent you from working, particularly in the long term, you might want to think about an alternative source of income. You could consider training in an area that still involves supporting others but is less physically demanding, such as nutritional therapy, counselling or even becoming a therapy training provider. If you're more established and have a large client base, hiring another therapist to do the treatments while you focus on supporting and growing the business is another option, but do think carefully about this, as becoming an employer carries a lot of added responsibility.

Cover yourself

For many therapists, not being able to work for a substantial period of time is a very real financial concern. At the FHT, our combined medical malpractice, public and products liability insurance policy carries personal accident cover as standard, covering permanent total disablement and accidental death. If you are also concerned about the financial impact of a long-term illness, you may want to consider taking out critical illness cover. As ever, make sure you read the small print and take financial advice, where appropriate. ■



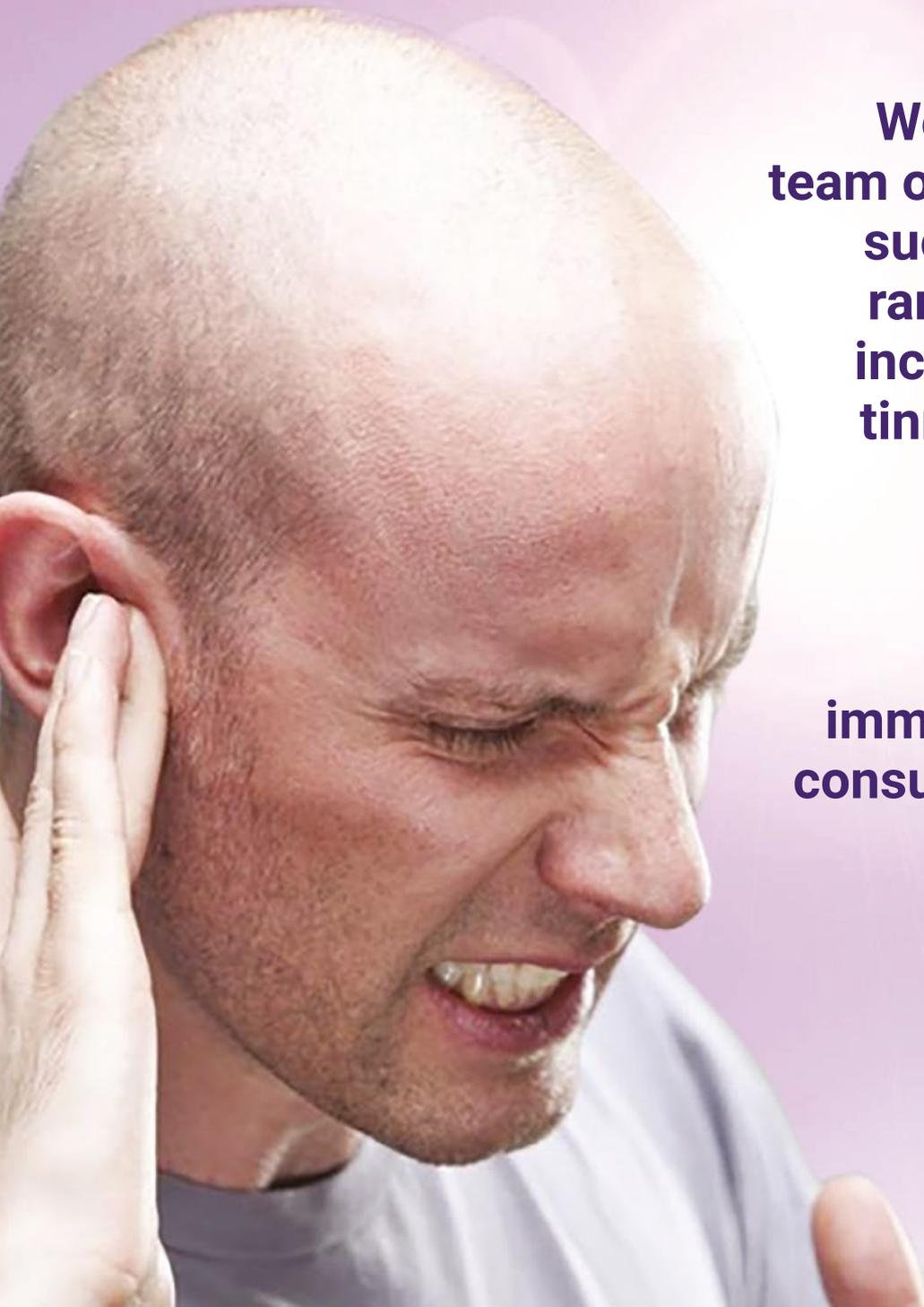
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JOURNEYS:

Melaina Evans

The universe brings many people to me who need things unlocked within them.

MY spiritual journey as a light worker began about four years ago and what a journey it has been!

I've experienced many hardships in my life. I never knew my father and my childhood was lonely. At the age of eighteen I met my first boyfriend. I remained in this relationship for seventeen years. When it ended, I felt physically and emotionally broken, but it gifted me two magical children, both now in their twenties.

I believe this suffering was the key to my spiritual awakening. One night, I asked the powers

of the universe to show me what I should be doing in life. That night,

I had a vision I was an angelic healer. I believe deeply

that I am divinely guided.

Subsequently, I started practising on friends and family and I work completely intuitively.

To this day, I have had no formal training, yet the healing flows from my hands. I sometimes offer pro bono treatments for those who cannot pay.

I have always had a great connection to nature. I love walking

in the forests close to my home in Ludlow, Shropshire. I believe trees offer energy to help with our healing process. Each tree has their own specific healing energy and I have used these many times to heal myself over the years.

The universe brings many people to me who need things unlocked within them. I seem to be releasing trapped emotions, taking darkness out of them, and

Melaina Evans broke free to start a new life as an intuitive healer and light worker...

replacing it with light. I help them reach their true potential and speak their truth. Raising their vibrations makes them feel happier and healthier. My healing opens up something different in each person.

Recently, I helped someone with severe blockage in her chest which was causing food to keep going down the wrong way. She was undergoing tests and had been warned the blockage may be cancerous. After a few sessions, I was able to move the blockage up to her throat area and saw it as a black mass. I intuitively knew it was linked to issues to do with her self-worth because she was unable to say no to people's constant demands. Since she has started saying no to people, her lump has dissipated and is no longer causing her a problem.

Another client is a wise 90 year old man, who had practiced meditation for many years. I was able to help him access his full light body after clearing a blockage in his pineal gland. He now feels more vibrant and vital than ever.

I find we often seek short term happiness outside ourselves without realising happiness always comes from within. Recently I have made many changes in my own life, leaving my partner, job and home, to start afresh. These events have pushed me into a higher understanding of the awakening process, and I have found I can hold even more light within me.

I feel I am here to help Mother Earth to help raise the vibrations of humanity so that we can live in harmony and love with each other. I'm excited to discover the next opportunities the universe will send me. ■



To find out more about Melaina and her work, please e-mail

melainaevans01@gmail.com or call 07704 903269.



Of tripe and Tuscany

*Sometimes lessons about health come from surprising sources, as **Ed Joy** discovered in a Tuscan layby...*

I am fortunate to spend a lot of my work time travelling both in the UK and around Europe. As I travel, I'm often reminded of an adage; a cultured person is not so much someone who travels to other places, but someone who allows the places they visit to become a part of them.

One place I always enjoy visiting is Italy. On a recent trip, after a week of intensive meetings, my colleague Simone, who is a naturopath based in Pisa, announced that to celebrate we would be taking a trip to Florence for lunch. Lunch in Tuscany can be a lengthy affair, especially when celebrating! I was very excited as I had never visited Pisa and was filled with the images of architectural splendour and renaissance high art.

The week's work completed, four of us jumped in a car and set out on the 90 minute journey, enjoying the delights of the Tuscan landscape along the way. All slender cypress trees and olive groves straddling the hillsides.

I have to say I was surprised, and not a little bit disappointed, when Simone pulled the car up in a lay-by on Pisa's outer circular ring road. There was nothing but a few trucks and a roadside diner to see. More like kebabs and burgers on the A42, with not a portico or marble sculpture in sight! Simone gave me his broadest smile and announced, "Trippo per pranzo, Edward!" – "Tripe for lunch, Edward!"

When I think about tripe, I think of my mother's stories of growing up in Birmingham in the late 1940s. Tripe was, to her and many other children of the day, food eaten for a lack of other options. Not what I think of as the height of

Tuscan gastronomy. I should have considered that, that, during a period of great hardship and rationing, tripe and other offal fed to her generation did them no harm. I needn't have worried in any case, Simone had never let my stomach down before!

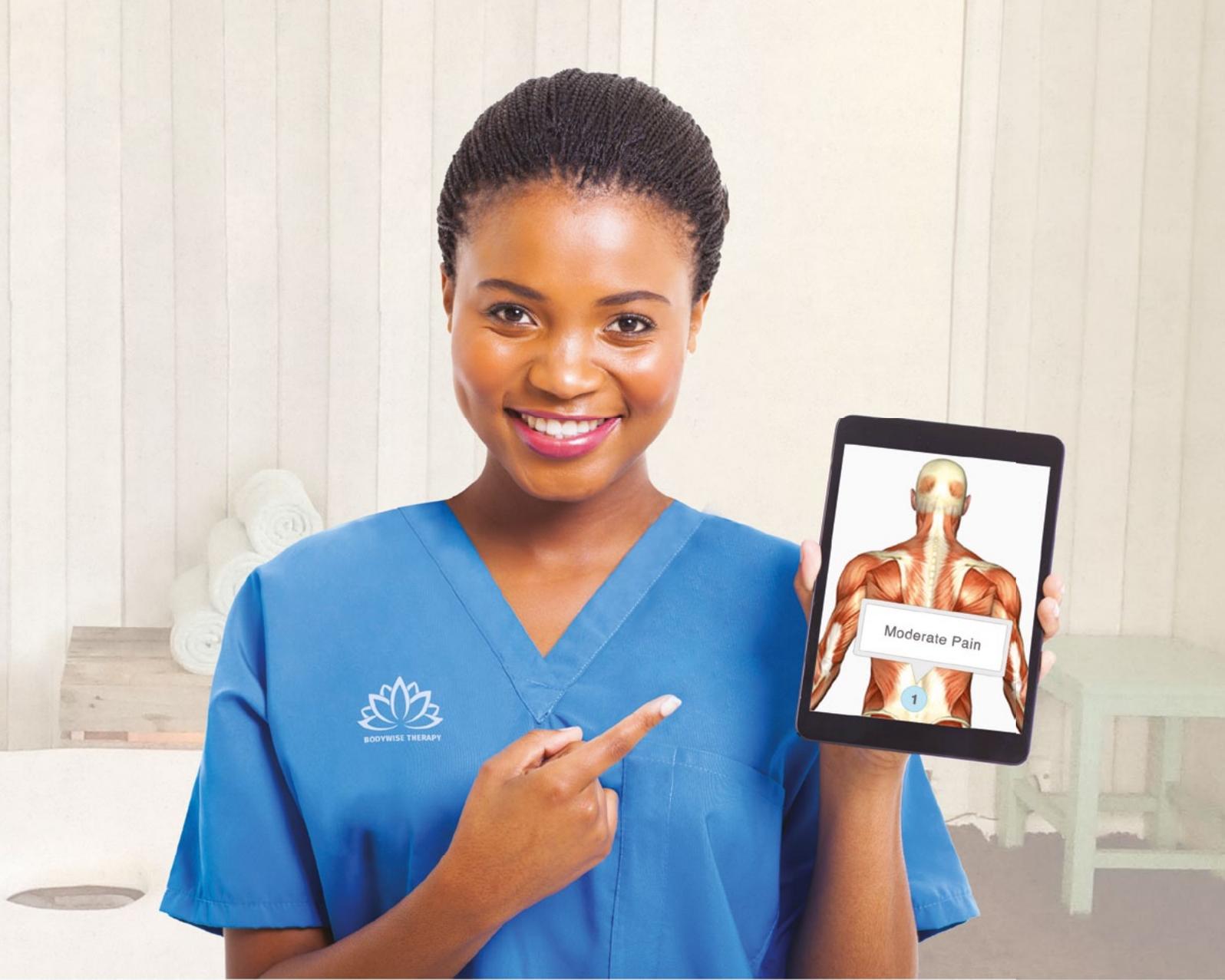
I have to say, the meal I sat down to that sunny afternoon, gathered round a plastic table and chairs, as the gentle rush of lorries whistling by was one of the greatest meals of my life. The tripe had been marinating all day and was heavily infused with wine, oregano, rosemary, thyme and parsley. Accompanied by a bottle of wine which had been saved for a special occasion, it was simply delicious.

But am I really extolling the health virtues of tripe or just recounting a favourite tale? Well, I should say that the disappearance of tripe along with other more varied cuts of meat from the British palate has definitely not had a positive influence upon our health.

The thing I admire about my colleague and friend Simone is that, in his practice in nutrition and naturopathy, his focus is not so much on what he can exclude from a client's diet but what can be bought into it to positively influence their health. Like Hippocrates, food is his medicine and his practice is thriving as a result. If my work has been cultured by one concept as result of my own travels I hope it is this one, because within it is the true picture of health. ■



ED JOY works for Bionutri, the naturopathic supplements manufacturer. He gives talks around the UK on Herbal Nutrition. For further information please contact info@bionutri.co.uk or phone **0121 628 1901**. 📞 www.bionutri.co.uk or follow [@EdJoyHealth](https://www.instagram.com/EdJoyHealth).



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HAPPY ENDINGS: HOW TO *deal with unwelcome* CUSTOMER REQUESTS

Therapist **Magdalena Lorynska** shares her approach to unwelcome customer requests...

“Do you offer any extras?”, “How much with a happy ending?”, “Do you offer body to body massage?”, “I will pay double if you...” and - my personal favourite - “Do you offer nudist massage?” These are all requests that massage therapists and bodyworkers hear from time to time instead of the legitimate enquiries for a massage treatment.

I now realise I was quite naïve when I entered the profession. I think many of us are. We are predisposed to think well of people and expect the same types of behaviour from others as we exhibit ourselves. I didn't know that I would have to deal with enquiries quite like these. I'm not sure if knowing this would stop me deciding to become a therapist but I am sure that knowledge of these requests would make me better equipped for dealing with these situations.

I once had an enquiry where an individual asked me for a “nudist” massage. I responded that he should contact his local nudists’ society and they could recommend the best person for him, it turned out that he wasn’t really a nudist - he wanted a massage with “extras”.

Over the past 7 years, I have probably received around 80 calls or messages asking for extras. I once answered a sexual enquiry call when I was in a room with my son. It was a most horrible experience. You can’t help but feel a little bit disturbed by it.

Those who ring from a disclosed number I save and store under “Black List” but there have been many more calls from concealed numbers which I have answered and am unable to block.

I strongly believe that the sexual enquiry calls have an impact on therapists, some more than others. I have known female therapists not treating men because of it. I also know cases where therapists have stopped working in massage altogether, due to inappropriate calls. Personally, those calls have resulted in dips in my confidence. In the past I would dwell on them and they would upset me a lot. Things are different now and as I developed my mindfulness practice I seem to be dealing with them much quicker.

The way I deal with sexual enquiries has changed over the years. Now, I am to the point! I no longer try to educate the callers about the harm they are doing by asking them how they’d feel if it would be their daughter or mother that was receiving calls like this. Now, I simply text or say, “if you contact me again I will report you to the police as it is illegal to solicit individuals in the UK”. I sometimes get an apology but most often they just hang up or stop texting.

In the event that someone calls or messages you persistently, or sends nude images, despite you being clear that you do not offer sexual services, this becomes a far more serious matter. Stalking is a form of abuse

and a serious crime. One national survey suggests five million people experience stalking each year, but few report it to the police until they have received around a hundred calls or texts. If you are being persistently contacted then you should contact the police, even if no threats are being made. Stalking information service Paladin reports that half of those who are being stalked have curtailed or stopped working due to being stalked. Therapists should not lose earnings because of unwanted requests for sexual services, so being firm from the start is essential.

One national survey suggests five million people experience stalking each year, but few report it to the police until they have received around a hundred calls or texts.

Over the years I have taken lots of action to reduce the number of unwanted enquiries, including educating myself on what other therapists have done and using their expertise to protect myself. I have made sure all my advertising materials and website look professional. I only advertise in reputable places. I remember when I started out, I would advertise on Gumtree. No-one told me that this is the first place people look for a massage with extras! Make sure your website doesn’t mention any words which could be associated with “extras”. For example, if your website contains a sentence that you do not offer sexual services, when someone searches for sexual services your website will be listed in the search and you will be contacted by unwanted enquires.

I am a member of several Facebook groups for massage therapists and the topic of sexual calls is a subject during many conversations. Many therapists have issues with setting up firm boundaries and how to respond to sexual enquiries. I strongly believe the reason for this is the fact that we do not learn about it

at all during massage courses. This subject is either not covered or is only mentioned in passing by a tutor. I believe dealing with inappropriate calls should be part of the Health and Safety side of the training. New therapists straight from college have little or no idea about what is waiting out there for them and I think it is time to change that.

I would say prevention is the best approach. Use a personal alarm. It is easy to put it on and keep it all day. Wear it even with regular clients. I would recommend attending regular self-defence classes or workshops. I always make sure that my partner knows what time I finish and what time to expect me back. My aikido sensei once told me that if you appear confident in the way how you walk and stand there is less chance of you being attacked. I think it is the same when it comes to inappropriate enquiries. In my studio, I have my insurance certificate and an award that I won on display. I believe that showing that I am a professional therapist makes individuals less likely to ask the question.

There are usually two ways of approaching face to face enquiries about extras, some therapists still treat the client and other therapists don’t. If a long-term client suddenly asks for a happy ending, this may be a sign of an inappropriate attachment, where the client assumes a deeper connection that goes beyond the professional relationship. I personally believe there are plenty of people out there who need what I have to offer as a genuine massage therapist. I do not need or want to work with those who want or need something that I am not prepared to give to them. ■



Magdalena Lorynska is a

Therapist, Massage Tutor and

Holistic Business Coach in Cheltenham.

Magdalena specialises in working with individuals who suffer with anxiety, depression and upper back injuries. Find

out more at <https://www.isbourne.org/profiles/magdalena-lorynska>

ONCE UPON A TIME: DISCOVERING STORY MASSAGE

Massage therapists **Mary Atkinson and Sandra Hooper** share the benefits of story massage...

STORY Massage is an easy and fun way of sharing the benefits of touch through a powerful combination of storytelling and simple massage movements. The Story Massage programme is based on ten strokes, each with a name, such as The Circle or The Sprinkle, and an easy-to-recognise symbol. These strokes are chosen to complement spoken words and bring the storyline to life. Tracing a large circle on the back, for example, can depict the image of the world while a drumming action can represent thunder or excitement.

The joy of Story Massage is that it can so easily be adapted for everyone, making it an ideal activity for children or adults with additional needs. Strokes are given through clothes and no oils are used. Massage can be given to the back, head, legs, arms, hands, feet – wherever is accessible and acceptable. The pressure of touch can also be varied from gentle to firm to suit the individual. You can be seated or lying down.

We first started collaborating on the idea of bringing story and massage together as a fun and inclusive therapeutic activity in 2007. With the help of parents and professionals including therapists, teachers and social workers, we developed the Story Massage programme. Our book was published in 2013 and we began running FHT accredited day courses teaching Story Massage. Over the past five



years, we've trained over 1,500 people from many different backgrounds and we have distributed our books to nearly every corner of the globe.

Everyone can enjoy Story Massage in their own way and add their own personal touch to their sessions. Therapists bring their own skills, qualifications and experience to their sessions. Therapists taking our CPD course have gone on work with children with ADHD, young adults with learning difficulties, and elderly care home residents. Those trained as Baby Massage or Reflexology Instructors use Story Massage as a popular follow-on course for parents. Some therapists (with an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate) have taken Story Massage into schools and run peer massage sessions in classes. Many people are also using Story Massage on a voluntary basis in the wider community. For example, Mary has worked with families after the Japanese tsunami, in a children's home in Nepal and with refugees in Dunkirk.

Once you have learnt the ten simple strokes, you have access to a whole new 'language' of massage strokes to share Story Massage with others in your work or at home. You can use pre-written massage stories, songs and rhymes from our book or adapt familiar songs, nursery rhymes and stories such as The Hungry Caterpillar or Cinderella. And if you choose, you can also use your imagination to create new massage stories written to reflect particular interests, situations, activities or events. Story Massage can be celebratory, imaginative, instructive, therapeutic and personal. You can add your own personality and skills to your sessions and tailor them to the individual needs of the child, adult, families or groups you are working with.

Some therapists put on one-off 'taster' sessions, maybe as part of well-being day in a library, or organise a course of sessions for families. Some work in schools and special schools on a regular basis.

Each session usually lasts around an hour, beginning with a short explanation of Story Massage with a demonstration and an introduction to the strokes. Then it is time to enjoy sharing Story Massage. The person giving the massage (whether the therapist, a parent or a child) asks permission to touch, listens to feedback throughout the massage, and thanks the person receiving the massage

at the end. This gives the important message of consent to touch and helps to build up trust and a sense of safety that is so important for relaxation.

Stories, songs and nursery rhymes are chosen to be age appropriate and engaging for the child or adult. Some may only last a minute and include two or three of the strokes. These are often repeated several times! Others may be much longer and include all of the ten strokes. Therapists encourage the activity to be continued at home, if possible, so that the benefits can be continued and shared with others too.

The key benefits of Story Massage include improved calmness and concentration; increased self-confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem; improved social skills; and regulation and expression of difficult emotions. There is also an educational element to Story Massage. Many children have learnt their numbers and letters, and elements of history, geography and nature through massage stories. Above all, Story Massage is fun. It offers an accessible way of bonding, communicating and building positive relationships through play and respectful interaction.

It is so rewarding to hear how Story Massage has helped a child bond with an adoptive mother, cope with the death of a grandmother, sleep through the night, accept a new baby in the family or overcome a fear of witches. We continue to be amazed by the power of positive touch and the difference that our simple programme of ten strokes is making to so many people's lives.

We run FHT and AoR accredited day courses around the country and also offer an online training option that is proving very popular with busy therapists. Our website has more information about training and links to our social media including You Tube with video clips of Story Massage in action. <https://www.storymassage.co.uk>. ■

"Story Massage is now part of our well-being curriculum at Bowker Vale Primary School. The children find it very relaxing and it helps them to focus and retain information. They learn to form more positive relationships with each other whilst



having

a lot of

fun. Parents

have commented how

it helps with bedtime routines and brings peace to the family home. Story Massage is a fantastic resource to use with children with the most challenging of behaviours."

Jo Heald, Therapist and Well-Being Co-ordinator.

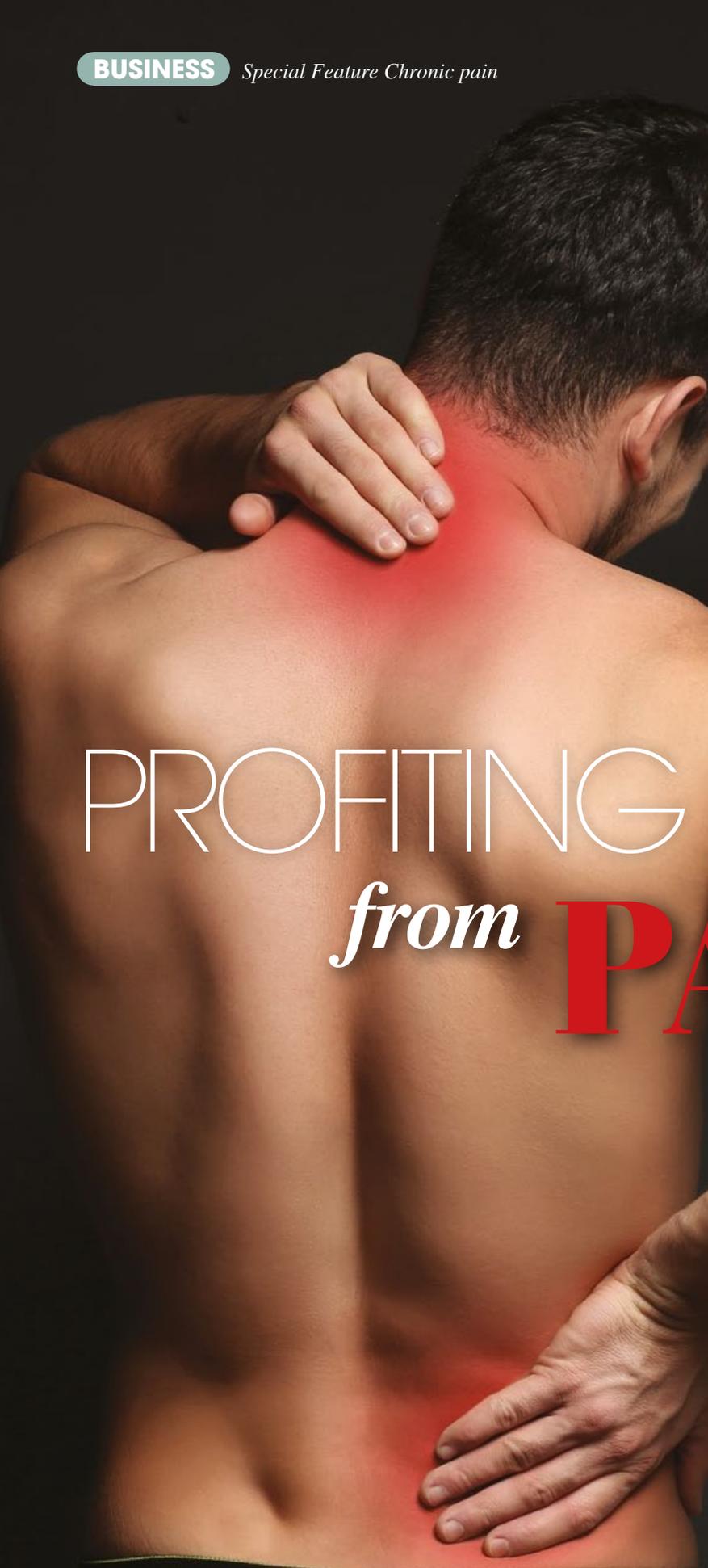
"My mother loves a massage story on her arm or back. She isn't able to join in the words but hums along and clearly enjoys it. We began with stories about her childhood - getting ready for a tin bath by the fire and remembering the gas mask for school - but as her dementia took hold, she began to prefer simple nursery rhymes or simple songs with Story Massage strokes." Aly Townley, Therapist and daughter.



MARY ATKINSON AND

SANDRA HOOPER are both

massage therapists with a mission to share the benefits of positive and respectful touch for children and adults of all ages and abilities. It is the combination of their interests, experience and talents that has made the Story Massage Project so successful. Mary is an award-winning therapy tutor, writer and author of four books on massage including Healing Touch for Children. Sandra is an experienced primary school teacher and worked as an international trainer on the Massage in Schools Programme.



PROFITING

from **PAIN?**

Clients come in all shapes and sizes, but many are experiencing chronic pain. We take a look at the facts and figures...

THE British Pain Society published the results of a large research survey into chronic pain in June 2018. This suggested that chronic pain affects more than two fifths of the UK population, meaning that around 28 million adults are living with pain that has lasted for three months or longer.

43% of the population experience chronic pain, with women being more likely to experience chronic pain than men, while prevalence was generally found to increase with age. In one study, prevalence among those over the age of 75 was as high as 62%. Up to 14.3% of those living with chronic pain that is either moderately or severely disabling, and pain accounts for a quarter of all visits to a GP surgery.

There's also increasing evidence that associates chronic pain with higher levels of mental health issues. Half of adults with depression or anxiety also report being in chronic pain, while other studies show that brain inflammation associated with chronic pain can facilitate feelings of anxiety and knee pain can lead to depression.

Surprisingly, it is only in the last few years that chronic pain, in and of itself, has been considered as a health problem, rather than merely a symptom. Alan Fayaz, who co-authored the report which appeared in the BMJ online, noted, "Chronic pain is costly at an individual and societal level; in the USA direct and indirect healthcare costs attributable to chronic pain outstrip those of cancer and cardiovascular diseases combined, and yet it doesn't have as high a profile. There is a reluctance to talk about pain because it isn't as visible or tangible as other conditions, even though it may have a devastating impact on quality of life. We need to challenge these conceptions, much in the way they have done with mental health."

Commonest causes of chronic pain

Obviously, some clients will know what caused their pain condition, particularly where this is the result of a physical injury, but many people experience chronic pain without being able to pinpoint a cause. In some cases, such as ME, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or Fibromyalgia, this can lead to the sufferer not being believed, or appearing unwell, which can add to the problems experienced.

Some of the commonest causes of chronic pain respond well to holistic remediation. Lower back pain, arthritis, headaches, fibromyalgia, and neuropathy can all be tackled through bodywork and other forms of therapy. While pain is a biological process, it also

involves individual social and psychological aspects, so coaching, talking therapies and hypnosis also have much to offer.

The NHS website lists ten ways to reduce pain, yet not one form of holistic therapy is mentioned, despite strong evidence that many treatments can help alleviate or even remove the underlying cause of pain.

The problems with painkillers

Allopathic medicine is often concerned with masking and managing pain, rather than dealing with the root cause of the problem. Painkilling drugs have their place, but the long-term nature of chronic pain can mean that people become reliant on drugs which can subsequently cause side effects, lead to addiction, or have significant withdrawal issues. It's also the case that not all drugs work for all people. The American Academy of Pain Medicine found that drugs help only about 58% of people with chronic pain. This represents an area of opportunity for holistic therapists.

In the UK, several organisations, including the Royal Pharmaceutical Society have expressed concern about the growth of opioids such as tramadol and codeine, while NHS digital has recorded a doubling of prescriptions for opioid painkillers over the past decade. Prescriptions for all opioids rose from 12 million to 24 million. Oxycodone prescriptions rose by 287%, morphine sulphate by 236% and fentanyl by 143%. Many of these drugs are obtainable online, with minimal checks leading to further abuse. Sales of over the counter painkillers, such as paracetamol, aspirin and ibuprofen have also risen. Even back in 2005, the average UK consumption of painkillers was 373 each, with one in twenty people taking six or more pills each day. It is believed that prescription painkillers cost the NHS in England around £700 million each year.

Opioid abuse and deaths by overdose are not the only issues.

A 2013 study by a team of Saint Louis University researcher has discovered a link between chronic use of pain-relieving medication and increase in the risk of developing major depression.

Those on opioids for 180 days or

longer

has

a 53%

increase in the risk

of developing depression where it

had previously been experienced and a 25% higher risk of developing depression where it had not previously occurred.

Other drugs are also prescribed for pain.

Several tri-cyclic anti-depressants offer a pain-relieving effect which appears to be distinct from the mood-boosting effect, while some serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors are also prescribed for pain, as are some anti-convulsant drugs originally intended for epilepsy. All can have side effects and their use must be monitored carefully.

Pain is as individual as we are

One of the main difficulties in understanding chronic pain, especially where no obvious cause is apparent, is the individual nature of the experience. Although pain charts are in use, what one person's classifies as mild discomfort can be seriously debilitating for the next. This is where the whole-person approach practiced by holistic therapists can offer major advantages over prescription drugs. It is important to treat those in chronic pain with dignity, empathy and understanding and to work together to discover treatment protocols that work best for that person. Explain at the outset that because of this individual nature, the first approaches may not be the most effective, but that you must both persevere to find what works. In many cases, the act of being believed, supported and listened to can ameliorate the psychological and social dimensions of chronic pain as much as your treatment modalities help with the physical aspects. People in pain should not be treated as being a pain. ■





My holistic approach TO PAIN

Touch and pain provide information to the brain about our own body and our immediate external environment. Touch also carries social and emotional significance. **Jo Sollinger** explains how she uses this in her practice...

CHRONIC pain conditions are highly diverse and can involve changes on peripheral, spinal, central, and physiological levels. The mechanisms are far from fully understood and developing appropriate treatments remains a huge challenge for researchers. It is often extremely difficult for clients suffering from chronic pain to pinpoint exactly the levels of pain experienced which makes treatment an exhausting process of trial and error.

Positive factors like social support and touch can reduce the risk of chronic pain after an injury. I believe chronic pain treatment should target these emotional and social factors as well as the physiological.

Suffering from chronic pain can have a dramatic

effect. Being in pain for a long time often leads to depression, anxiety and immobilisation. Holistic therapists spend more time with the client than conventional medicine practitioners to get to the underlying cause of the pain. The environment provided is also more pleasant and healing. Touch is incorporated more and dietary and lifestyle patterns are carefully reviewed. A detailed prescription is given to the client, exceeding what is commonly provided by allopathic primary care physicians.

I treated a lady at an elderly home who suffered from excruciating lower back pain which left her almost unable to walk. Her daughter's osteopath had recommended my work to her. Massage therapies helped her to cope with the painful condition. It felt so rewarding to see her smiling and generally more

optimistic. She told me that every time she went to see her doctor she was prescribed another medicine and was not given time to tell the doctor what she was experiencing.

I was shocked to see the very long list of pharmaceutical drugs she was taking. It included painkillers, sleeping pills, anti-depressants and, to my surprise, medication containing senna. This is intended as a short term constipation treatment only as long term use can be damaging to the heart, liver and muscles. I advised her to insist on talking to her doctor about the dosages and the possible side-effects from the medicines. I was particularly concerned about the effect of the drugs on her kidneys.

Overuse of pain medication causes up to 5% of chronic kidney failure cases every year. The overuse of antibiotics, diuretics and Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs), all affect and may harm the kidneys. It is important to support the kidneys when taking these pharmaceuticals and try to avoid long term use of painkillers.

Holistic therapists support the immune system

recommendation from conventional medical doctors is a prescription of opioid painkillers.

Bodywork therapies have been used to relieve symptoms of chronic pain for a very long time.



This approach is effective for treating chronic pain in the lower back and neck according to a clinical trial (NCCIH). Massage not only benefits physical health, it promotes mental wellbeing as well. The recommended self-care practices and massages serve

as an excellent way to disconnect from the daily stresses of life.

I value working closely with conventional and other alternative medical providers, like osteopaths, physiotherapists and acupuncturists. These referrals really help with the overall healing process.

I have treated many people who suffered from chronic pain due to physical or emotional trauma with excellent results. I often see positive results from two to three treatments each week, followed by monthly appointments. The brain seems to adapt to pain and discomfort and needs time to readjust to the new pain-free state, meaning pain relief is a gradual process. What makes my treatments really effective is working with the client to validate what they feel, helping them to feel safe again and bring the breath back into their being. It's simple but very effective.

Clients often say that I have very strong and magical hands. Touch for me is an art, as it engages

with the senses in a way that simply empowers us to be our creative selves, helping us to feel connected to the beauty and miracle of being alive.

I have treated those who have suffered great loss or grief. The emotional pain is often reflected into the body and becomes chronic, until they come to me and feel ready to go through the bereavement process. The bodywork is quite deep but at the same time, very gentle. Other chronic painful conditions come from physical traumas such as ski accidents or even falling from a tree as a child. After a few treatments, the client becomes aligned again and pain free.

To understand chronic pain and be a good therapist, I feel it's important to be a good listener, pay attention and try to understand what is going on inside of each patient so that I can grasp how they are feeling and what they really need. Many chronic pain sufferers, especially with changeable pain conditions, feel that others don't believe them.

My client's perception of empathy is more powerful than any technique I can offer. I have been practising my bodywork skills and monitoring the results for more than a decade. I pay close attention to my currently experienced growth. I take a step back, review my current clients and consider the lessons I am learning. This is empowering to myself and my clients, as it enables the lessons to take hold and add meaning to my development as a therapist.

I continue to investigate and wonder what message the chronic pain of each individual really means. I often remember why I became a therapist and reflect on my professional development through the experiences with clients who taught me the most.

I am committed to forming a partnership with clients to monitor the outcome of the services I provide. I also invest in myself, my own growth and development. The client's feedback is so valuable for me to learn and improve myself as a therapist. I am sure my love of this work makes a difference too. ■

JO SOLLINGER is a holistic health specialist and qualified human design analyst. She offers a range of tailored treatments from the Christchurch Doctors Surgery in Crouch End. To find out more, visit <http://josollinger.com/> or e-mail josoll100@googlemail.com.

by decreasing inflammation and pain with massage therapies, diet and relaxation. We always take into consideration the client's mental and emotional state. Massage therapy is scientifically proven to increase white blood cells and decrease the stress hormone, cortisol.

The body is equipped with self-repair mechanisms that can kill stray cancer cells, fight infections, and even slow the ageing process. These mechanisms only work when the nervous system is relaxed. When the body senses danger, the repair mechanisms shut down to deal with the threat.

Studies examining the effects of relaxation techniques and back massage on post-operative pain and anxiety support the use of relaxation techniques and back massage as a way to decrease pain and anxiety.

It takes time to treat someone suffering from a chronic pain. The problem is, most people want a fast cure. This is why the most common

MARKETING YOUR *chronic* pain services

Getting your message out there is not about profiting from the pain of others, but about helping people to feel better...

THE first step is to make a pain plan. Think about how you can help those in pain. Could your skillset be used in a new combination to focus on pain? Could you offer a pain clinic or a series of sessions designed to reduce pain symptoms? What about an aftercare service with regular treatments every five or six weeks to maintain a pain-free condition? Which particular pain conditions can you help with? Can your services be adapted to suit those with particular pain conditions? For example, might a seated massage be a better option for those who would find it painful to climb onto your massage couch? Try to put yourself in to the client's mind-set to make your service as effective as possible.

It's important to remember that many people aren't familiar with holistic therapies or what to expect when they come into a treatment room. We've all felt that awkwardness when we're not sure if we are supposed to keep our underwear on during a massage and many people feel embarrassed by our bodies.

If you factor in that those in pain will be suffering additional discomfort, then it's essential to provide as much information about your approach in advance of the first session. This

can also help attract new clients. Put them at their ease even before they arrive and your treatments will be more successful.

If you have particular success with one cause of chronic pain, such as using acupuncture for tennis elbow, sports massage for gym industries, scar work, fibromyalgia, or postural realignment, search for local support groups and or branches of associated health charities. Go to where the people with the pain can be found. Ask your clients if you could use them as an anonymised case study which you can then share with your target client group, or ask for a testimonial. Write blogs or use these stories as part of your social media campaign. Most people are happy to discuss their health issues.

Consider running a paid for ad campaign online which targets those with specific chronic pain issues.

Contact local GP surgeries and pain management clinics to see if you can leave marketing materials or perhaps demonstrate your services so they will refer clients to you. Many GPs would prefer not to issue repeat painkiller prescriptions, but may not know about other

options, especially if your modality is specialised. Be prepared to experience a hostile reaction, even though many doctors now take a more integrative view of healthcare.

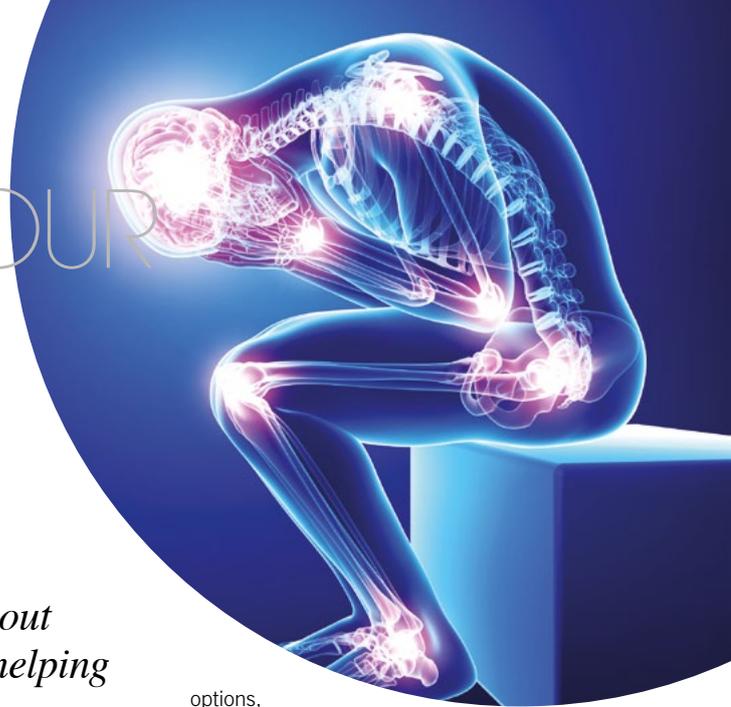
If you offer treatments which are suitable for the elderly, it can be worth talking to pensioners groups or organisations like the WI. If you prepare a speech, this can then be tweaked to suit your particular audience. If possible, you should demonstrate your techniques as part of this session. Remember to take business cards and offer several ways to get in touch.

Many GPs would prefer not to issue repeat painkiller prescriptions, but may not know about other options, especially if your modality is specialised.

Talk to the local press in order to raise awareness of the conditions you can help with. Put posters in local supermarkets, community centres, sports clubs, businesses and anywhere else you think your clients might be found.

Consider having an open evening or afternoon where potential clients can come and discover what you can offer. This will need to be well publicised and attractive to attract enough potential new clients.

By thinking about your service portfolio in terms of chronic pain and who you can help, you could bring in more long-term regular clients. ■



ONLINE CLINIC MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Power Diary is a GDPR compliant online private practice management system that is affordable, easy-to-use and suitable for **solo therapists** through to **large, multi-location clinics**.

FEATURES

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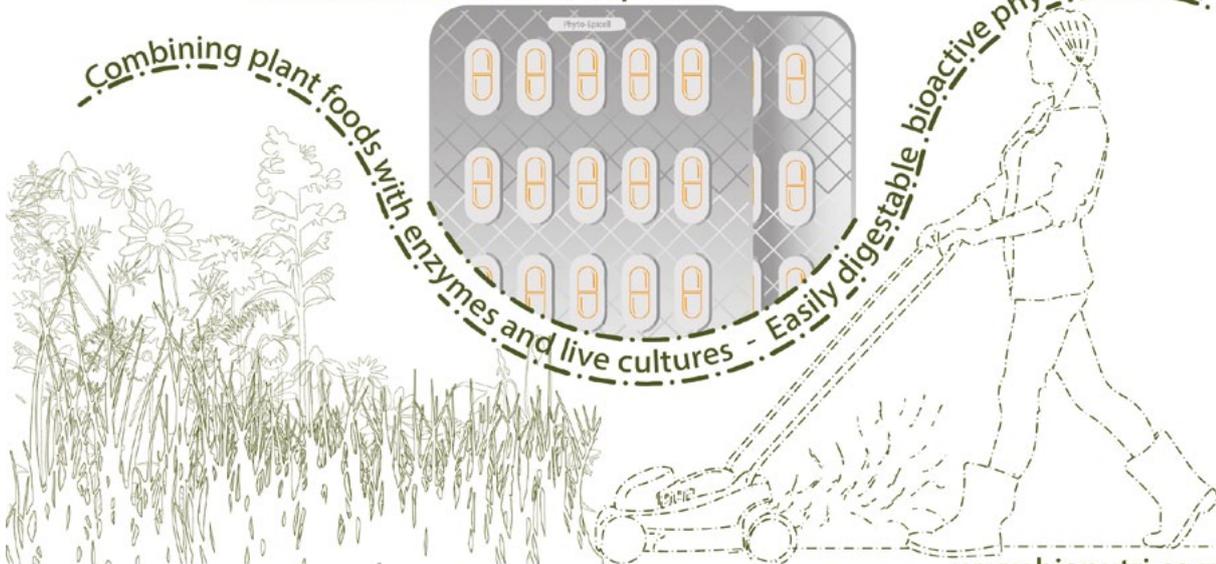
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KNOW YOU'RE GIVING THEM EVERYTHING THEY NEED



Marc Lazare

of Brighter Spaces



Marc Lazare of Brighter Spaces plans to transform the way therapists work...

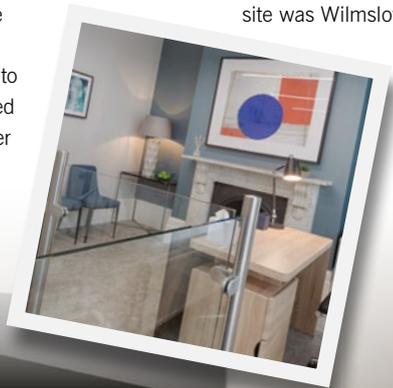
THE idea for Brighter Spaces came when I was looking for a physiotherapist after a serious leg injury. I found that most centres lacked inviting, safe, well designed and functional spaces. My business partner's daughter-in-law, who practices psychotherapy, had just qualified. She found it very difficult to find an attractive and affordable space that didn't ask for commitment to on-going block bookings. This gave us the inspiration to create Brighter Spaces.

Having spoken with a number of therapists before launching, we discovered that flexibility was the key priority. Not everyone can afford or wants a dedicated full-time workspace. Renting by the hour puts flexibility back into the working day. Discounted rates are available for longer term arrangements. In

addition, Brighter Spaces offers a community network of wellbeing professionals providing them with the opportunity to network personally and professionally whilst referring and sharing knowledge with their peers.

We found that there was a definite need for these types of spaces for therapists. We researched online and also visited our perceived competitors by experiencing them ourselves; seeing what they do and what we wanted to do differently.

Guildford was our first site. It has its own identity, a community, densely populated, commutable from north and south. Our second site was Wilmslow. It's where I grew up and there was a need for our type of space. Our newest site is London. Islington is central, residential yet near the city and West End.



All Brighter Spaces have a dedicated concierge at each space. Therapists can focus on their clients without having to worry about clean rooms and facilities. Our concierges are all about being friendly and accommodating, putting people instantly at ease and providing the therapists with a safe and professional space for their clients. The spaces are also confidential, you don't know who is in which room doing what so customers feel much more at ease rather than going to a big centre, which for some therapies can be overwhelming and uninviting for clients.

The main business challenges have been in distinguishing ourselves as different from the current common spaces such as yoga studios, who have add on therapy rooms. The payment structure also took time. We need to discover whether therapists would be using our spaces regularly enough to make the business model viable and building a community for therapists. One of the things I love is the sheer variety of therapists who use our spaces. We have Psychotherapists, Life Coaches, Physiotherapists, Counsellors, Nutritionists or Reflexologists, Chiropractors, Massage therapists, Reiki plus a host of others.

We have plans to roll out more spaces across the UK and introducing a new feature which is a co-working hub space for the therapists to use between clients so they can stay on the premises more comfortably and easily network with each other. ■



If you'd like to try Brighter Spaces for yourself, Marc is offering Holistic Therapist readers three hours free at the venue of their choice. Just create a free account at www.brighterspacesuk.com and then three free hours will be applied.

PESTO PERFECTION



*We had no idea that pesto could be so versatile. Here are some absolutely delicious winter warmer recipes from **Olwen Woodier's** *The Pesto Cookbook*...*

GOAT'S CHEESE, YOGURT AND LEMON PESTO

Makes about 2 cups

This pesto adds a vibrant flavour to grilled chicken salad, a platter of crisp-steamed or grilled vegetables, a cut of lamb, or just about any kind of seafood. If the yogurt is particularly tart, add 1 tablespoon of honey or add only 1 tablespoon lemon juice.

Ingredients -

½ cup parsley leaves
 ½ cup coriander or mint leaves, ¼ cup lemon thyme leaves,
 ¼ cup roughly snipped chives or spring onions (green part only), or ¼ sweet onion, sliced, ½ cup crumbled goat cheese or feta (plain or herbed)
 ¼ teaspoon ground ancho or chipotle powder, or ½ teaspoon for extra heat
 freshly ground black pepper, 4 large cloves garlic, Sea salt, ½ cup plain Greek yogurt (low fat or whole)
 1/3 cup olive oil, 1 tablespoon honey (optional), 2 tablespoons lemon juice.

Method -

● Place all the ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth



or to desired consistency, scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary.

CAULIFLOWER-CHEESE SOUP WITH PISTOU AND GARLIC NAAN

4-6 servings

This soup is very flavourful even without cooking the vegetables in oil first. The potato and puréed vegetables create a thick soup that does not require the addition of flour.

I serve it with grilled naan bread, which I often make from scratch.

It is also available in supermarkets or Asian food stores.

Ingredients

1 medium head cauliflower, broken into florets, 1 large red or yellow potato, peeled and thinly sliced, 1 large red onion, peeled and thinly sliced, 1 large carrot, scrubbed and sliced, 2 large garlic cloves, sliced, 4 cups vegetable or chicken stock,

½ teaspoon mild curry powder, ½ teaspoon ground cumin, ½ teaspoon sea salt, ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, 1 cup semi-skimmed or whole milk, ½ cup crumbled blue cheese or feta cheese, 3 or 4 garlic or plain naans, 1 tablespoon olive oil or herb oil purée, 2-4 cloves garlic, minced or crushed, 1 cup Parsley-Fennel Pistou

Method -

● Put the cauliflower, potato, onion, carrot, garlic, broth, curry powder, cumin, salt, and pepper in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook until the vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and use a stick blender to purée.

● Stir in the milk and the cheese. Return the pan to low heat for 5 minutes if necessary to warm.

● Preheat the grill with a rack positioned 4 to 5 inches below the heat. Brush each piece of naan with oil. Spread minced or crushed garlic over the top. Grill for 2 minutes, being careful not to burn them. Cut each naan into four pieces.

● Spoon the soup into bowls and dollop 1 to 2 tablespoons of the pistou over the top. Serve with the hot garlicky naan and additional pistou at the table.

FRESH GREEN HARISSA WITH BEANS AND CHEESE *Serves 8*

This is a very quick way to make a spicy frijoles y queso with whatever kind of beans you prefer. Serve in flour tortillas or with tortilla chips as an starter. It's also good spooned over an omelette and topped with salsa.

Ingredients:

½–1 teaspoon red pepper flakes or ground chili powder, 2 400g cans pinto or black beans, drained and rinsed, 8 ounces grated cheese, 4 ounces Neufchâtel cream cheese or spicy Boursin, ¼ cup semi-skimmed milk, white wine, or light beer, 2–3 teaspoons plain flour, 1 cup Fresh Green Harissa, 4 spring onions, both white and green parts, chopped.

Method - ●

Place the pepper flakes, beans, grated cheese, cream cheese, milk, and 2 teaspoons of the flour in a medium saucepan. Stir well. Cook over medium heat for 5 to 10 minutes, until hot and gooey, adding the remaining teaspoon of flour to stabilize as necessary.

● Remove from the heat and stir in the pesto. Top with the spring onions. Serve warm.



Cauliflower-Cheese Soup with Pistou and Garlic Naan

ROASTED BEETS AND BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH HERB-FETA PESTO

4-6 Servings

I love beets and find they add sweetness to Brussels sprouts, which can be a tad bitter. Roasted cauliflower and shallots make another good combination to use in this recipe, as do potatoes, carrots and garlic. To adapt this recipe to spring and summer favourites such as asparagus, snap peas, and green beans, steam the vegetables lightly, then finish them off in a very hot pan with a little oil before tossing with the pesto.

Ingredients -

6 medium beets, 8 ounces Brussels sprouts, ½ teaspoon sea salt, ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, 1 tablespoon honey, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 6–8 slices bacon or pancetta, snipped into ¼-inch pieces with scissors, ¼ cup dried cherries or cranberries, chopped (optional), ¼ cup chopped pecans, walnuts, or pistachios (optional), 1 cup Herb-Feta Pesto.

Method -

● Precook the beets and Brussels sprouts. Place the beets in a



Roasted beets and brussels sprouts with herb-feta pesto

microwave-safe dish with 1 tablespoon water. Cover with cling film and microwave on medium-high for 10 minutes. Tip the beets into a colander and run them

under cold water until cool enough to handle. Slip or peel off the skins. Cut into ½-inch-thick slices, and cut any large slices in half. While the beets are in the microwave, cook the sprouts in boiling water for 3 minutes. Drain in a colander and rinse with cold water.

● Finish cooking the beets and sprouts. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Place the beets and sprouts on a large baking tray or roasting pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and drizzle with the honey and olive oil. Toss to combine, then spread out evenly on the pan. Roast for 15 to 20 minutes, or until tender.

● While the vegetables roast, cook the bacon in a large frying pan over medium heat until crisp, about 10 minutes.

● Remove the vegetables from the oven and spoon into a shallow serving bowl. Sprinkle the bacon, dried fruit, and nuts over them. Spoon ¼ to ½ cup pesto around the edges of the bowl, and serve extra pesto on the side.

Excerpted from *The Pesto Cookbook* © by Olwen Woodier. Used with permission from Storey Publishing. Photos by © L Ferroni



Boosting YOUR IMMUNE System for winter

The ANP's Leyla El Mouden offers some naturopathic advice to keep sniffles at bay...

WINTER brings cold weather and cold weather reduces the temperature of our nose and upper respiratory system. This reduces our immunity as well as providing optimal replication conditions for some viruses. The Rhinovirus, which causes the common cold, prefers a cooler environment, which is why winter colds are more prevalent.

Body temperature is a major player when it comes to protecting oneself from colds and viruses. When a pathogen is present, the body's immune response includes raising the temperature, which means more specialised immune cells are produced in greater numbers. Those immune cells mount a fight

to ward off viruses and other pathogens. This is why we often feel hot, sweaty or fevered when ill. Conversely, a lower body temperature decreases our immune power.

Scientists believe that it is the cold temperature of the nasal passage that lets the cold virus in. The evidence is not conclusive, but does explain why the first sign of cold is often a runny nose. The key to not catching a cold therefore seems to be to keep our noses warm – a difficult feat to achieve indeed! As wearing a nose cosy is impractical when working with clients, having some good old fashioned remedies around will certainly help your body ward off colds throughout the winter.

In Herbal Medicine, fire cider is an excellent first line defence which should be used at the

very first signs of a cold. It has been used for centuries and is a marinade of spicy, hot herbs and foods steeped in apple cider vinegar for a few weeks. You can make it by taking a sterilised jar and filling it to the very top with equal parts crushed or chopped ginger root, horseradish, turmeric, onion, garlic and chilli peppers. Once you have filled the jar to the very top, squeeze over the juice of two lemons and then the rest of the jar with apple cider vinegar. You can add two tablespoons of Manuka honey to taste. Leave this in the fridge for 2 weeks before use. A tablespoon of this mixture will throw a hefty punch into the face of any oncoming colds or flus. You can keep this mixture in your fridge for the whole winter - it will get more and more potent until the 3 month mark, and then stay stable for a very long time. Enough time to last the winter.

If fire cider is a little too hot, or you just don't like spice, then turn to the classic immune herbs such as Echinacea. The key with Echinacea is to use it as a preventative rather than as a cure. Echinacea works best in a mixture of 50:50 root to flowers in tincture form. If you want a good strong one, you will need to source it from a qualified herbalist.

Scientists believe that it is the cold temperature of the nasal passage that lets the cold virus in.

The homoeopathic remedy is Aconite 30cc. This is a lovely, gentle remedy that can also be used for children and toddlers.

Lastly, vitamin C is an extremely potent antiviral that can defend against a cold and also help overcome one more quickly. Look for a liposomal version of vitamin C rather than a water soluble tablet for an immediate boost. ■



Leyla El Mouden is President of the Association of Naturopathic Practitioners. Find out more about Leyla at <http://leylae.co.uk>. The ANP can be contacted via www.the-anp.co.uk.

OOOHHH! THAT'S NEW!

A few ideas to treat yourself or those around you...

► Green People Gym Bag Heroes

For some reason, it's often more awkward to find great men's toiletries if you want good quality, effective, yet gentle skincare products. This grab and go bag from Green People comes complete with their No. 6 Detox Shower Gel, No. 8 Thyme & Prebiotics Deodorant and No. 10 Itch Away Shampoo, containing Organic Aloe Vera, Green Tea, Seaweed and Thyme for a refreshing, yet masculine scent. The products are suitable for those with eczema or psoriasis and free from all sorts of questionable chemicals. £39.95 from www.greenpeople.co.uk.



Vegan Cheese Making Kit

Vegans aren't always easy to cater for, or to buy foodie gifts for, so we were pleased to discover The VeganKind supermarket. There's a subscription box service as well as an online supermarket covering with everything from toiletries to tofu. This Big Vegan Cheese Making Kit contains enough ingredients to make twenty batches of vegan cheese, including Mozzarella, Ricotta, Mascarpone, Halloumi, Feta and even Parmesan. All you need to add is nuts and almond milk! £27.50 from www.thevegankind.com.



Zephorium scented candles

Everyone loves scented candles, and Zephorium's are particularly lovely. They smell great without containing indoor pollutants. Zephorium's gorgeous hand poured aromatherapy affirmation candles are made of coconut wax, aromatherapy oils and homeopathic crystal energy for a complete mind, body and soul experience. Each beautiful, brightly coloured glass jar offers a thirty hour burn time, with the scent colour-coded to one of the chakras. Perfect for when you need to spoil yourself a little or as a thoughtful gift. £38 from www.Zephorium.com



► Necklace from YogaClicks

YogaClicks.com is also a new discovery for us, but it's the perfect go to site if you're looking for some unusual gifts. Everything is made by yogis and it's clear that a lot of love, thought and skill goes into this curated collection. You'll find great yoga wear, mats and equipment from small brands, alongside gifts for the yoga bunny. We loved the beautiful mala necklaces made of hand strung semi-precious beads, like this Zakti Mala necklace. www.yogaclicks.com.



▲ GOPO joint care supplement

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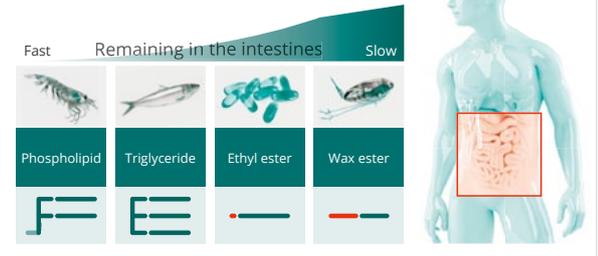


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REFLEXOLOGY

and the emotions

Foot reader Jane Sheehan discusses reflexology as a means of understanding your client's health and emotional issues...

THE way we walk and the way we stand tells others something about us. Any actor will show you that they can impart an emotion just by changing the way they walk.

HARD SKIN

As a reflexologist, I look for swellings, hard skin, areas that are too tight or too flacid. When doing a treatment, I think on a multi-level. Let's say I find an area of yellow hard skin on the ball of the foot between the big toe and second toe metatarsals. My thought process goes something like this:

Is there a breathing issue? The ball of the foot can represent the lung.

Is there a thyroid or para-thyroid issue? This area between big toe and second toe metatarsals can represent thyroid, parathyroid and bronchi helper area.

Is this person a smoker? (Yellow and hard skin on ball of foot can indicate lung issues from smoking).

If the answer to these questions is no. Then I consider the emotions.

The line of hard skin can represent a division. The area on the ball of the foot below the big toe represents thinking impacting emotional life and the area of the ball of the foot below the second toe represents feelings impacting on emotional life. Yellow represents being fed up. Put it together and you read it as, "you are deliberately separating your logic from your emotions in order to deal with your emotional life and you are fed-up of having to do this."

In this way, I can be a truly holistic therapist looking at both the physical and emotional aspects of a person through their feet.

CRACKED HEELS

Let's take hard skin with cracks in it on the heels.

Is there an immune system issue? (The lymphatic J round the heel is a helper area for the immune system and shows as weak when there is hard skin).

Is there an issue with the hips? (The outside edge of the heel can represent the pelvis).

If the answer is no, then I consider the emotions. The heel can represent sense of security and how you want to move forward and take the next steps. The hard skin is protection. Ask yourself why would you protect your sense of security? Probably because you are feeling insecure. The cracks represent the obstacles that you feel you have to overcome before you can move forward and take the next steps. Put it all together and you would read it as, "There are obstacles that you feel you have to overcome before you can move forward and take the next steps. As a result, you are feeling insecure about your future." Based on which zone on the heel the biggest crack is situated, I can ask further questions about the obstacle to help them to explore how they will put plans together to overcome the obstacle. Focusing on the biggest crack is the best bet, especially if there are lots of cracks. Often things seem overwhelming when there seems to be too many to tackle, which is why I focus on just the one. After all, action cures fear.

In using reflexology to examine the emotional wellbeing of your clients, you can deepen the client-therapist relationship and gain a better understanding of your clients' needs.

SWELLING

General swelling on the foot can indicate oedema or swelling in the body. This, in turn, can indicate poor blood circulation or can be a result of chemotherapy or other medical treatment. Small swelling such as a lump on a toe can be from a shoe rubbing. Reflexology can help with these things. But on questioning the client, it may turn out not to be any of those things. In

which case, I switch to foot reading. A swelling can represent a congestion of emotion – a feeling being held in. The colour might tell me more. For example, red for anger, yellow for fed up, blue for hurt. Where the swelling is on the foot can also be interpreted to gain more information.

A common place for an area to be swollen is in the vertical zones 4 and 5 below the fourth and little toe, on the horizontal zone 3, the upper instep. This would be the spleen reflex. Once you establish that it is not an actual spleen issue, then you can ask about, "how you are holding in feelings stemming from the way you are thinking about private life and sense of security and plans for the future, which are impacting on your working life."

PURPLE/BLACK IN TOE PADS

When you see a very dark colour in the toe pads, a sort of purple-black colour, you would be right to consider whether your client has poor circulation or a circulatory disease such as Reynards. If there is no such physical issue, you can then consider whether the client is depressed. In reflexology, the toe pads represent the brain and in foot reading, the toe pads represent thinking. The way they are thinking is coloured with depression or feeling low.

SPINE REFLEX

The spine reflex is situated along the medial edge of the foot (the part where if you put your feet together, the sides of the foot touch each other). When you see blemishes or distortions along the

spine reflex, you would be questioning whether the client had backache, disk problems, or other spinal issues. If it isn't a spinal issue, then referring to foot reading you could be looking at a lack of support. You can further interpret by noting in which horizontal zone is the blemish to give you an idea of topic. For example if it is in horizontal zone 3 on the spine reflex then you would be asking about them having a lack of support for what they are doing/in their working life.

In using reflexology to examine the emotional wellbeing of your clients, you can deepen the client-therapist relationship and gain a better understanding of your clients' needs. ■



Jane Sheehan is author of

Let's Read Our Feet, The Foot

Reading Coach and Sole Trader: The holistic therapy business handbook. She has also co-written "Reflexes: physical and emotional" which is exclusively available from the Association of Reflexologists. She teaches foot reading internationally. See her website

www.footreading.com.

THE PRACTICAL Goddess

Alison signs up for a course of rediscovery...

were meant to be. It's about becoming a leading lady, rather than consigning ourselves to being part of the supporting cast.

Each of the twelve months of the cycle takes a new theme, which encourages participants to explore aspects of themselves that have become submerged. There's an online Facebook group which allows us to share our thoughts and celebrate our triumphs. It's a joy to be part of this and to see other people blossom. For some it's tiny steps, perhaps making a plan to return to work next year, or driving several hundred miles by themselves for the first time. The course is like having your own life coach on hand all year.

Donna is a particularly inspiring coach because she has figured out her own path and made the changes needed to create her own contented life. She now helps other people to do the same.

Each course starts in January, and many spaces are already booked up for 2019. The cycle starts with welcoming in the New Year,

looking forward and letting go, before February's activities which are centred on creating a vision of our goddess selves, and manifestation work, before creating a sacred space in March. As the months progress, we discover more about abundance blocks, extreme self-care, creativity, wellness, trusting and working with our intuition, wellness and positive habits.

As a means of rediscovering yourself, or moving forward to becoming your next you, I can recommend it. I've found myself exhibiting paintings, speaking at public meetings and being described as, "magnificent". I'm nowhere near where I want to be and where, thanks to the confidence, genuinely interesting and challenging activities, great personal support and timely reminders The Practical Goddess Course offers, I now know where I want to be and how I'm going to get there.

Rediscover your true potential at <https://vitality-retreat.com/classes-workshops/practical-goddess/> ■

SOMETIMES, I feel that I'm fading away in some ways despite the malicious efforts of my scales to tell me the opposite is true. We spend so much time on the dull routines of everyday necessity, on pleasing others and being there for every little bump in their roads, that we lose sight of our own path and what makes us extraordinary. I have a fabulous wardrobe, but I live in jeans, huge jumpers and furry boots. Rather than look immaculately coiffured, I frequently resemble something that's been dragged through a hedge backwards, because the dog delights in watching me retrieve her ball from under the spruce trees. I paint, but my easel is sporting a couple of scarves and a vintage Japanese Silk Kimono that needs to be stitched to completion, rather than my latest masterpiece. I'm creative, I'm my own boss, I'm funny, persuasive, positively erudite, well-read, I have a loving partner and even the dog is intermittently obedient, I study as a perpetual hobby and should have another degree next year. I'm involved in my community – in fact, on paper, I'm many of the things that I and others aspire to be. It's just that, on a day to day level, I seem to have forgotten this. Somewhere along the line, the domestic has taken over from the goddess.

Obviously, something needed to be done and so, I turned to Donna Booth's The Practical Goddess course. It's designed to give us back ourselves and provide a supportive and structured pathway to becoming who we want or



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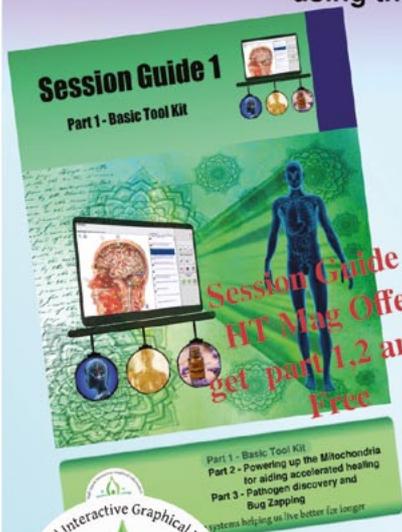
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WHY WATER MATTERS: MORE THAN JUST HYDRATION

Roddy MacDonald, of Water for Health, shares his thoughts on the importance of restoring body's pH levels...

ALTHOUGH the concept of acid-alkaline balance and various forms of the alkaline diet have been with us for the last few decades, there is still considerable controversy around the subject. Many doctors and nutritionists hold the view that the body's buffering systems will always keep body pH within a very tight range that is necessary for everyday functioning.

Over the years there have been numerous research articles published, which have primarily focused on the effects of low grade metabolic acidosis and the impact this can have on body systems. When we are talking about body pH, we are referring to the pH of the blood and tissues, which should ideally be within the range of 7.35 and 7.45. The pH scale is logarithmic and ranges between 0 and 14, with 7 being neutral, less than 7 being acidic and more than 7 being alkaline. Consequently, we see that the blood and tissue pH should always be mildly alkaline.



Modern living, in terms of highly acid-forming diets, environmental pollution and exceptional stress levels are increasingly putting pressure on the body's buffering systems. Research indicates that as we age, this can lead to low grade metabolic acidosis. That means a slight deviation of body pH below 7.35. One of the most important knock-on effects is a reduction in the blood's capacity to transfer oxygen. It also makes it more problematic for the body to remove toxins and assimilate certain nutrients. This combination of lowered oxygen levels and the build-up of toxins creates an environment for disease.

Not only does it provide an environment for disease, but it creates a much more hospitable environment for harmful pathogens. This compounds the problem, as these harmful microbes and parasites metabolise food and, as part of their metabolic processes, add to the acidic toxic load in the body. This cycle can quickly spiral out of control, setting the scene for immune dysfunction and degenerative disease.

As a consequence it is important that people consider the impact of their dietary choices and lifestyles on body pH balance. Although it is difficult to measure body pH other than in hospital conditions, measuring urine and saliva levels with simple pH reagent strips will give an indication as to what is going on in the blood and tissues.

If we are to enjoy optimum health, we need to be mindful of the impact our dietary choices and our hydration is having on our body's biochemistry.

THE NEED FOR GOOD HYDRATION.

We often forget about hydration, and the crucial role it has on health and body pH balance. Without good hydration, we are unable to remove toxins from the body. Our bodies are typically composed of nearly 70% water, with certain organs such as the brain having even higher percentages.



That is one reason why dehydration often affects the brain first, resulting in “brain fog” and poor concentration.

Many people consume liquids such as tea, coffee, soft drinks and believe they will help body hydration. Paradoxically, many of these drinks actually compound the dehydration problem. Other people do consume copious amounts of water but it is not absorbed and simply flows through them. This is frequently caused by low levels of electrolytes; much of this is, in my view, encouraged by the consumption of very little salt. The body needs good salt to function optimally. I would always encourage people to use a good quality sea salt or Himalayan salt.

I believe that good health-giving water should have a number of important characteristics in order to best meet the body's hydration needs. It should be as free as possible of contaminants; be slightly alkaline; have antioxidant properties; be suitably structured; and lastly, have good energy. Sadly the majority of water we drink meets few of these criteria.

IS TAP WATER REALLY HEALTH-ENHANCING?

We live on an increasingly polluted planet and although we get water flowing from our taps that is deemed to be suitable for our health, there are increasing concerns about toxicity. Some have concerns about toxicity of chemicals added to the water supply network, such as chlorine and fluoride. There are also trace levels of other toxins such as heavy metals, pesticide residues, hormonal compounds, drug residues (both illicit and prescribed) and the iniquitous glyphosate

herbicide. Although these may occur at low levels, there has been no research to determine negative effects. This is troubling given the aforementioned cocktail of substances.

For the 30% of the UK population that have fluoride added to the water, it is bad news. There is extensive controversy around fluoride and most other European countries no longer believe the supposed benefits of improved dental health merit the inclusion of this toxic chemical in our water supply. It is not as readily removed from the water as chlorine. Chlorine is added to the water supply as a disinfectant, but there are concerns as to its impact on the body and in particular its impact on the microbiome and thyroid. Our microbiomes, which have a very significant impact on our overall health, have already suffered due to antibiotics and many other prescription and environmental toxins without the added burden of chlorine. Consequently, we should endeavour to remove fluoride and chlorine from our water supply before we drink it, so as to minimise toxic load.

NATURAL MINERAL BIOCERAMICS

New advances in the use of bioceramic filter materials have given us solutions to greatly enhance the quality of the water we drink. These materials, which are combinations of natural minerals and crystals, can be used to give water the good structure needed for optimum hydration. Additionally bioceramics also give water alkaline, antioxidant properties. This antioxidant effect is due to the release of small amounts of molecular hydrogen. Over the last decade there has been a significant amount

of research published on molecular hydrogen and its benefits as a powerful antioxidant. It is interesting to note that reverse osmosis water and distilled water have very poor water structure due to the absence of necessary alkaline minerals which are helpful in this regard.

If we are to enjoy optimum health, we need to be mindful of the impact our dietary choices and our hydration is having on our body's biochemistry. There are many simple dietary choices we can make, such as consuming more vegetables, less meat and less dairy. Reducing or ideally eliminating our consumption of added sugar, processed foods and highly processed vegetable oils will significantly reduce the acidic toxic load on the body. For many people, additional supplementation will be necessary to help maintain optimal balance. ■



RODDY MACDONALD is the

founder of Water for Health Ltd, specialist suppliers of water filtration and energising products. Roddy previously worked in the environmental sector, specializing in wastewater treatment. He is passionate about sharing information and products that had helped him recover his own health. For further information, please visit www.water-for-health.co.uk



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Gene Living is here to help each individual discover what their body really needs to thrive. It's a fact that blood type directly influences what types of food and exercise benefits your body – your blood type even influences your personality. Dr. D'Adamo's Blood Type Diet is one of the most popular personalised diet systems in the world – mainly because it actually works!

Help your clients lose weight, regain their energy and achieve optimum fitness by following our nutrition guides paired with our natural supplements. All our products and guides are created to suit our individual requirements – because why would you follow a diet plan that doesn't consider what you really need? Forget fad diets, offer your clients the best of personalised nutrition by running one of our Gene Living Groups.

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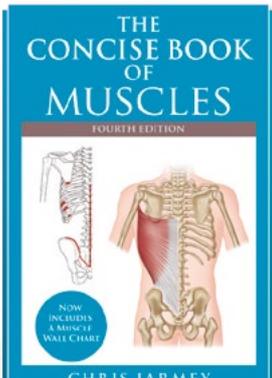
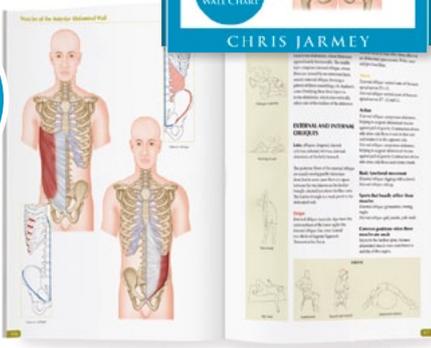
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COENZYME Q10 – A SKINCARE ESSENTIAL

Pravera's Rowan Green explores this popular skincare ingredient...

COENZYME Q10 is a nutrient that occurs naturally in the body. It acts as an antioxidant, which protects cells from damage and plays an important part in the metabolism. Q10 is found in every cell in the body and is particularly associated with mitochondria. CoQ10's primary role is to help mitochondria harvest energy-producing adenosine triphosphate (ATP) from the foods we eat. More than three quarters of the body's energy is produced this way, so when CoQ10 levels are low, ATP production drops and energy levels dip. It is required as part of the energy production pathway and to fulfill the skin's basic functions such as regeneration and repair.

The level of Coenzyme Q10 within the skin rises from childhood to adulthood, peaks between 20 and 30 years old and then gradually diminishes with age. While we can get some Q10 from our food, it occurs at the highest levels in meat and in some vegetables, particularly parsley and perilla. There are moderate amounts in avocados, nuts and broccoli. Levels of Coenzyme Q10 in the blood serum may also be reduced where beta-blockers or statins are being taken. Some people choose to take a Q10 supplement, but it is also an effective ingredient in some skincare ranges.

Within the skin, Coenzyme Q10 is found mainly in the outermost layers, protecting deeper layers of from free radical damage, one of the major causes of skin ageing. Poor levels of Coenzyme Q10 results in the skin's inability to produce collagen, which gives skin firmness and elasticity which results in sagging and wrinkles. As skin matures, it may become thinner and begin to sag, and sun damage can lead to wrinkles.

Using products with Q10 rejuvenates skin by stimulating

skin cell activity. Active skin cells get rid of toxins easily and can make better use of nutrients. When skin ages, all these processes slow down, causing dull and sallow, wrinkled skin. Q10 is suitable for vegans and vegetarians, who may experience reduced Q10 levels from their diet.

Q10 stimulates collagen production, which promotes

skin elasticity and a more youthful appearance. Young skin has ample amounts of CoQ10 and so has lots of energy – energy needed to repair damage and make sure the skin cells are healthy. Q10 is also a potent anti-oxidant that acts against oxidative damage and photo-aging caused by UV radiation from sunlight, pollution, toxins and stress.

A 1999 study by German researchers reported that long-term use of CoQ10 reduced crow's feet. Other studies have shown that Q10, which is a small lipid-soluble molecule, can be replenished in the skin by using a cream formulation, when applied twice a day over two weeks. Skincare products containing Q10 have been shown to support the skin's natural functions and protect it from damage.

When shopping for the most effective Q10 products, look for a certified organic range such as lavera basis Q10 products. The range

includes a moisturising cream for day and night, a Q10 eye cream for reduced wrinkle depth and improved elasticity. The range includes organic ingredients such as jojoba oil and organic aloe vera. ■



To find out more about Coenzyme Q10 products, please visit www.pravera.com

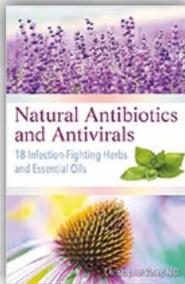
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Autumn Bookshelf

Is there anything better than cosying up by the fire on a crisp autumn night with some hot chocolate and a new book or two? Here are some interesting new reads...

Natural Antibiotics and Antivirals

Respected naturopath Christopher Vasey has produced a very timely and thought provoking book, given the growing threat of anti-biotic resistant micro-organisms. The opening section provides a comprehensive and comprehensible guide to germs and infectious diseases. There are detailed listings for eighteen herbs and essential oils which are suggested for treating minor infections at home, then suggestions for treating an A-Z of ailments. It's clear that we need to find natural alternatives to antibiotics and this is an excellent starting point. www.innertraditions.com or Amazon for £11.49.



Pure Skin Care

Stephanie Tourles's newest title is packed full of nourishing skin care recipes. If you've ever wanted to make your own personalized skin care treatments, or want ideas for creating your own skin care line, you won't go far wrong. It's well illustrated

with plenty of step-by-step guidance and sound advice. It would also make a great gift, or a bonding activity with teenagers or friends. There are recipes for everything from simple hand creams, moisturisers and cleansers to spicy aftershave tonics and masks that sound good enough to eat. The spiral binding makes it very practical when you're experimenting in the kitchen. RRP £15.99 from good bookshops or £13.18 from Amazon.



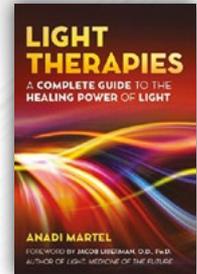
Essential Oils: A Beginner's Guide

Our second Stephanie Tourles title, this is a really useful book for anyone keen to find out more about essential oils, without picking up on some of the dangerous ideas being pushed in some commercial quarters. There are some lovely recipes and blends to get you started, including A Walk in the Woods Anti-Fatigue Drops, an Orange-Mint toothpaste and even a gel for calming bunions. It's even got the ubiquitous lavender pillow. The ideas are great and most of the products could be made with a collection of ten or twelve oils. It's one of the best options we've seen for anyone just starting out with essential oils, but keen to get a good understanding of the basics. £13, but also available in Kindle format.



Light Therapies

I've never really considered light as a healing power, but Anadi Martel has put me right. I knew we need sunlight to create vitamin D, of course, that our circadian rhythms can be thrown off by changes in light levels and that lasers can offer successful treatments for many skin problems. Colours, too, since they reflect different wavelengths of visible spectrum light, can change our mood or the way we perceive ourselves. Martel shows that there are many more possibilities for using light as therapy. One of the books strengths is in a well-rounded approach, combining science, history and spirituality to explain how light can heal and harm us. It also provides an intriguing introduction to several forms of light therapy, including chromotherapy, heliotherapy, actinotherapy, and thermotherapy. Available from www.HealingArtsPress.com or online sellers.



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SIX NEW TRENDS

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SUCCESS NEXT YEAR

The consumer landscape is constantly changing. To prosper, holistic therapists need to understand and harness emerging consumer trends. Luckily, Mintel have given us a sneak peek at their predictions for 2019 and beyond...

THE consumer research experts, Mintel, have identified six emerging consumer trends that will shape buying behaviour in 2019 and beyond. Businesses which understand these trends and can position themselves to take advantage of them, will perform significantly better than those which fail to understand the changing needs of consumers. Such trends do not merely affect large businesses or the retail sector, but can make the difference to individual practitioners and their livelihoods. This is particularly relevant as these emerging trends offer the perfect environment for holistic therapy to flourish as an industry.

Total Wellbeing

Simon Moriarty, Director of Trends EMEA, explained, "In 2019 and beyond, growing consumer curiosity with the microbiome shows no signs of abating. From gut-friendly fermented foods to probiotic skincare, consumers will demand products that balance and boost the natural bacteria found in and on the body.

“Consumers are looking externally to their surroundings and internally towards their physical and mental wellbeing, expecting holistic approaches to wellness that produce the same benefits. Across the globe consumers are increasingly seeking personalisation and in the UK, as many as 42% of Brits are interested in a personalised diet based on their genes/ DNA. Developments in health monitoring, such as skin sensors or ingestible capsules, will satisfy consumers’ demand for this personalised approach, while also building on scientific research in these emerging fields.”

Challenge accepted

“As appetites for adventure grow, consumers are becoming more willing than ever to expand their comfort zones and push themselves to the limit with new experiences. Growing confidence means, for example, that being single no longer presents a barrier to explore, as 63% of British solo holidaymakers agree you can have more of an adventure travelling on your own.

“Social media inspiration is blurring the line between reality and #lifegoals, opening consumers up to a whole new world. It may be fuelling a love of adventure, but social media is not without its pitfalls and in the years to come, companies and brands should proceed with caution.”

Look to add new ideas and excitement to your treatments, perhaps bringing in ideas with a more exotic appeal.



Rethink plastic

“When it comes to recycling, well-meaning consumers are desperate to do the right thing but they often simply don’t know how or where to start. In the UK, 49% of consumers who recycle food packaging most of the time or less say that clearer instructions on which parts of packaging can be recycled would encourage them to recycle more often. As consumers continue to challenge brands over the perils of

plastic waste, the development of recyclable products and packaging that are convenient for consumers to separate will be critical. But equally as important will be creating incentives and initiatives.

“In 2019 and beyond, expect to see more sponsored ‘reverse’ vending machines and bring-your-own-mug schemes. But it takes more than any one individual or brand to save the world. The future will be about working together. Companies and organisations should look to partner in order to create or crowdsource ideas that will make innovative and disruptive changes, such as the development of biodegradable materials, the search to enhance the recyclability of plastic or the cultivation of a better waste management system.”

Consider ways of reducing plastics in your practice to be on trend here.

On display

“Consumers and brands have come to accept and nurture their digital personas, perfectly curating their online identities. But even among the most carefully crafted feeds, one misguided post can lead to intense scrutiny and public backlash.

“Today’s consumers are not afraid to speak out, for instance in the UK, 28% of Millennial consumers (aged 18-37) say they feel very confident about expressing a different opinion in a conversation. Now more than ever, it’s crucial for companies and brands to have social media strategies in place and to train employees about company morals and etiquette,

so that when (not if) they are faced with a sensitive issue, they know how to handle it in a timely way. While it is good to balance the cycle of ‘negative exposure’ by sharing positive stories, it’s important to also promote critical thinking and dissent. This will help brands align with consumers’ defiant side and break through their filter bubbles.” Differentiation is key in this consumer landscape, but you must be careful to present a coherent social media presence that aligns with your core brand values.

Social isolation

“Technology can make the world a lonely place. Consumers increasingly live their lives through smartphone screens, and although connected electronically, they are becoming isolated from each other both physically and emotionally. People are questioning the benefits of social media as in the UK, a fifth (21%) of consumers who have cut down their social media usage or taken a break from it in the last year say they have done so because they were worried about their mental health.

“Facilitating connections and creating unique spaces where communities can be built is the next stage in cultivating customer loyalty. Brands who position their physical and virtual ‘space’ as places for consumers to meet while also eating, shopping or taking part in a leisure activity will lead to a boost in not only engagement, but revenue.”

Consider ways in which your business can help people feel less socially isolated.

Redefining adulthood

“With experiences over material things being a key priority for Millennials, companies need to focus on campaigns and opportunities that centre on making life memorable. Taking a technology-first approach could be the answer, as more and more consumers are commonly relying on technology to manage their everyday ‘adult’ tasks. For example, in the UK, 48% of Millennials (aged 19-38) would be interested in receiving automated online financial advice tailored to their personal situation, for example.

“Despite more convenience and opportunity, the challenges of adulthood have not disappeared. Those looking to capitalise on this will serve as a resource for these hurdles, by making responsibilities feel more manageable and even fun (sometimes). Flexibility is the name of the game. With a growing remote workforce, consumers’ daily lives are fluid and brands have to adapt to lifestyles no longer defined by 9-5 work cultures.”

Think about how you can benefit from more fluid work trends and technology. Would your modality work as an online service or even an app? How can you reposition your services as an experience rather than a commodity?

By considering these trends, and understanding what potential clients will want and need in 2019, holistic therapists can gain more of a share of disposable income and enjoy long term success. ■

Back PAGES

All the news and interesting stuff we wanted to tell you about, but couldn't fit in elsewhere...

COMPLEMENTARY THERAPY AWARDS

These new awards have been developed in association with the Federation of Holistic Therapists. They celebrate the work and achievements of complementary therapists who work alongside statutory regulated health professionals and services helping patients to regain and retain their health and well-being.

The award categories are: Palliative care; Cancer care; Prevention and self-care; FHT Award for complementary therapy research; Mental health and well-being; Pain management; Injury prevention and rehabilitation and, finally, Furthering integrated healthcare. You'll find this year's shortlisted candidates here: www.complementarytherapyawards.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Complementary-Therapy-Shortlist-2018.pdf. The winners will be revealed at the celebration lunch on 18 October at the Cumberland Hotel, London.

INTERNATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS WEEK

November 5-9th marks International Stress Awareness Week. There are events all over the country. You can find out more, and how to get involved next year at <https://isma.org.uk/national-stress-awareness-day>.

NORTHERN COLLEGE OF ACUPUNCTURE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

The Northern College of Acupuncture, based in York, celebrated its 30th birthday on Saturday September 1, with a day-long celebration event.

Over 150 current and former students from across the UK, as well as teaching staff and guest speakers, gathered to participate in seminars, group discussions, and an awards ceremony that honoured – amongst others – the College's 'Acupuncture Hero' and its 'Founders Award'.

The NCA trains qualified acupuncturists and also offers a Master's degree in nutrition, as well as online courses. The college was the first UK teaching institution to offer a University degree in acupuncture; the first to offer a postgraduate degree in Chinese Herbal Medicine; and the first to achieve professional accreditation for its Acupuncture, Chinese Herbal Medicine and Nutritional Therapy courses.

College Principal, Richard Blackwell stated, "It was a real pleasure to see so many of our graduates, tutors past and present, and current students - gathered together to celebrate our 30 years milestone. Since our start in 1988 we have graduated around 800 students on our degree and postgraduate courses and our graduates, with their high level of training, are making a difference to people's health and well-being all over the UK and beyond."



TRY THIS... GROUNDING EXERCISE

If you have a few minutes between client appointments, or at the start or end of your day, try this grounding exercise from Australia's Scott Jeffrey, founder of CEOsage, a transformational leadership agency.

Close your eyes and as you inhale, trace the air as it enters your nose and goes into your lungs. On the exhale, follow the air leaving your lungs and exiting your nose or mouth.

This grounding technique gets more effective with practice. The key is to observe the breath instead of forcing it with your mind. Let your body lead and your mind will follow. Try it for a minute and work up to a ten minute exercise.

PROTEST LEADS TO REGISTRATION RIGHTS FOR ACUPUNCTURISTS IN INDIA

The Maharashtra Acupuncture Council (MAC) has allowed permanent registration for all acupuncturists, both medically qualified and non-medical practitioners.



This decision was taken after over 150 acupuncturists protested at the Directorate of Medical Education & Research office. Although the protesters won the right to be registered, they face a substantial fee to do so,

The new registration system is banded, with category A rankings being reserved for medical doctors, B for therapists practicing for more than 25 years and C for therapists with experience of five years or more. It is not clear, therefore, how recently qualified therapists can become registered.

Previously an internal issue with the governing body, led to a delay in processing registrations for 25,000 acupuncturists who ended up practicing without licenses.

AROMATHERAPY AND REFLEXOLOGY SHOWN TO HELP WITH CANCER SIDE EFFECTS

A study undertaken at the Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove



Research Institute, has shown that both aromatherapy and reflexology dramatically reduce the pain and anxiety associated with cervical radiation therapy.

In an interview with CURE, Lisa Blackburn, a clinical oncology nurse specialist explained previous studies have shown that up to 40 percent of women experienced such significant anxiety and pain because of cervical radiation therapy that they developed post-traumatic stress disorder.

Subjects who were given aromatherapy with three essential oils to choose from (peppermint, lavender and lemon), with a 30-minute foot reflexology session during the downtime after the radiation device was placed and before treatment. When comparing the control group to the experimental group, the researchers reported preliminary results that show a 60 percent reduction in reported pain, along with a 20 percent decrease in anxiety.

Blackburn noted, “They relax people. “Whether you’re having symptoms or not, the aromatherapy and reflexology make you feel better, especially in these patients. These non-invasive tools also help to distract patients and give them a sense of control.”

CAM APPROACHES THOUGHT TO HELP ALLEVIATE PSORIASIS SYMPTOMS

A research review suggests that several holistic modalities including acupuncture, meditation, and herbal remedies can help with the symptoms of psoriasis. Symptoms may be eased by topical ointments and medications, but there is no cure. It is thought that up to half of those with



psoriasis used CAM treatments in some format.

The researchers reviewed sixty previous studies. Dr. Alexandra Price of the University of Miami in Florida, explained, “Certain complementary and alternative medicine therapies, such as indigo naturalis, curcumin, fish oil, meditation, acupuncture, and hypocaloric diets, have been shown to be safe and effective treatments for psoriasis in randomized controlled trials, although fish oil had conflicting results.” She added, “While there are a number of natural therapies available over the counter, only a few of them have been studied in trials.”

GREENS MAKE PLEA FOR PEOPLE TO RECONNECT WITH NATURE FOR IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH

Caroline Lucas, the co-chair of the Green Party has spoken out encouraging people to reconnect with nature to combat



the country’s mental health epidemic. She is asking for the government to change planning rules to ensure everyone in the UK has access to green space. Ms Lucas commented, “All of us need to get back in touch with nature. We’re facing a mental health epidemic in this country alongside the systematic degradation of our land.”

“Nearly two-thirds of people say they have experienced a mental health problem – and this rises to seven in every 10 women, young adults and people living alone.

“Research shows moving to greener areas improves people’s mental wellbeing for the long term – but with those living in the most deprived areas having the highest rates of mental health problems and the least access to green spaces, we should be taking nature to the people.” ■

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Holistic Health Magazine is unique. It's the first quarterly, interactive digital magazine designed to inspire, motivate and educate on all aspects of health. We take a deeper look at the key elements that make us happy, healthy and successful – a combination of physical, mental, emotional, energetic and spiritual aspects, for a whole person approach.

We take an informed, broad view of health and medicine, encompassing both ancient traditions and the latest scientific research, recognising that we each need to be treated as individuals, rather than a checklist of symptoms. By bringing together this information, we aim to provide our readers with the tools to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, whether that involves nutrition, alternative therapies, lifestyle changes, talking therapies, spiritual development or allopathic medicine.

Holistic Health Magazine is the go-to destination for reliable health information, with accessible but in depth studies of lifestyle diseases such as stress and type 2 diabetes, mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, ADHD, the autistic spectrum, aging, arthritis, cancer, gut health and auto-immune

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