

ACTIVE BODY

Using physiotherapy to treat a painful shoulder, why low fat foods are often not what they appear to be, and advice on treating a slipped disc

Edited by Steve Moody



THE FULL COMPLEMENT

The initial complementary therapy consultation is critical, says award-winning Bowen Technique therapist and instructor Helen Mary Perkins

People seek out a complementary therapist for many reasons, very often when a painful condition worsens, or they simply get fed up with popping painkillers which simply mask the symptoms.

It could be that other forms of conventional treatment are not always successful, or it can simply be the case that a person prefers a more natural approach. Personal recommendation plays a part and it is not unusual these days for a therapist to receive a GP referral.

Whatever the reason, there is no doubt living with pain can be debilitating; be it sudden onset from accident or sporting injury or a chronic long-term condition. One

such condition is fibromyalgia, in the news recently after Desert Island Discs presenter Kirsty Young announced a break from her radio role to focus on her health.

Hands-on therapy such as Bowen can be highly-effective in helping to manage pain (both on-going and short-term) with back, neck and shoulder problems responding particularly well. One client, dependent on disability benefit, reports less pain and improving mobility after being forced to give up a job he loves in engineering at the age of just 45 due to chronic lower back problems.

The initial consultation is critical not only to trace the original source of the problem,

which may be causing pain elsewhere, but to gain a wider understanding of lifestyle and behaviours that might hinder recovery.

This initial session can often prove cathartic to the client, an opportunity to 'offload' worries that might be exacerbating their physical problems. Examples might include work-related stress leading to headaches, insomnia, poor diet and low mood which can have a negative knock-on effect throughout the body.

If we feel a holistic approach is appropriate, it is possible to recommend them to professional colleagues such as a medical herbalist or counsellor for additional support.

While Bowen can target specific problem areas, complementary therapy takes many forms. As the name suggests, it can be used as a 'complement' or in addition to more conventional medical treatment. Often based on centuries of knowledge, such therapies should not be confused with 'alternative' therapy which, some would argue, has negative connotations.

Please ensure your chosen therapist is properly qualified by searching the relevant professional organisation.

Helen is a member of Bowen Therapy Academy of Australia and Bowen Association UK. For more information or to book an appointment call 01733 555476 or go to www.helenperkins.com

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