BOWEN THERAPY

Bowen Therapy is a form of hands on body-work developed by Osteopath Tom Bowen in the 1960’s. Tom Bowen applied his knowledge as an Osteopath with the assistance of a qualified TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) woman to essentially merge these two separate practices, which became Bowen Therapy.

What can Bowen Therapy assist with?

Neck/Back/Shoulder issues, frozen shoulder, knee issues, headaches, migraines, RSI, Tendonitis, Sciatica, Hormonal Imbalances, Pelvic Misalignment, bulging discs (managing the symptoms associated with this condition), lethargy, chronic fatigue, fibro myalgia, stress management, digestive issues, and many more issues.

The Bowen move is very different to massage or other forms of body-work. It is a cross fibre move. It is performed in a way that directly impacts on the fascia, which is a fine layer of tissue that surrounds every structure in the body. Connective Tissue also known as Fascia contains many layers of collagen. These layers of collagen become ‘glued’/stuck together (in this state, it is dehydrated) which is when the Connective Tissue is then compromised. Any structures this dehydrated Connective Tissue surrounds will be affected. Considering that all structures in the body are surrounded by this tissue, it is easy to appreciate the impact that dehydrated Connective Tissue can have. Blood vessels, lymphatics, nerves, muscles, tendons, ligaments, major organs are all impacted. Long periods of dehydrated Connective Tissue will over time, compromise functionality.

The Bowen Therapy cross fibre move is designed to rehydrate this connective tissue/fascia. For those that are keen to research/read more about this please scroll to the bottom this for more detail under Fascia/Connective Tissue Anatomy. It is believed that when this connective tissue/fascia is fully hydrated, it allows the structures it surrounds to function more effectively. The Bowen move is very specifically placed and impacts on particular structures of the body. The TCM component is impacting on meridians and chakras. Bowen Therapy not only impacts on the physical body but the emotional, spiritual and energetic realms as well.

How does fascia/connective tissue become dehydrated? There are many contributing factors. The main factor is a lack of consumption of water. Majority of clients that I encounter, drink well below their daily requirement of water. Over an extended period of time, dehydration causes many issues. Another contributing factor is a magnesium deficiency. Magnesium plays a role in many pathways in the body. One of which is cellular hydration. Do you ever feel that no matter how much water you drink, you cannot satisfy your thirst? This is typical of the water you are drinking, not being utilized efficiently on a cellular level. This disruption to the hydration process, also can cause systemic issues in the body. Another common cause of hydration issues is stress.

Lets be honest here, in this current world we live in, I don’t think there is a single person that does not encounter degrees of stress daily. The severity of the stress will also determine the severity of your dehydration levels. These are just a few of the contributing factors associated with dehydration. There are many more, but these are the most common.

Bowen is performed on a fully clothed person (loose clothing is required), laying on a massage table. The length of a Bowen Therapy session can vary depending on the individual and how much their constitution can manage. This will be determined during the initial consultation process.

Dayna varies the pressure that is used in the Bowen moves to ensure they are executed within a client’s pain threshold. (If someone does not like firm pressure then gentle pressure can be used with effective results).

It is recommended that before having a Bowen Therapy session you endeavor to drink between 1 litre to 2 litres of water to gain the most benefit from your session. Continued hydration is a necessity after your Bowen Therapy session to achieve the best results.

POST BOWEN THERAPY SESSION

After a Bowen Therapy session, there are things that you can do to enhance the results, and there are things you can do that will diminish the results. Therefore, please endeavor to do the following things after your session:

1. Drink sufficient water to avoid dehydration. Ongoing hydration will support your treatment, allowing the body to hydrate and respond in the most effective way to the Bowen Therapy session. If you fail to drink sufficient water, particularily immediately after your session, there is a risk of you feeling ill or experiencing body aches or head aches. This can be caused from toxins that have been released from the body work not being flushed out with water. If you start to experience these symptoms, immediately increase your water intake.
2. Avoid heat packs and hot showers. The purpose of Bowen Therapy is to hydrate the fascia. If heat is applied to the areas we have attempted to hydrate, this is counter productive and can diminish the effectiveness of the treatment. Warm showers and baths are fine.
3. If you have been advised that magnesium is an issue that requires addressing, it is important this is done. Otherwise this will directly impact on how effectively you respond to your Bowen Therapy Treatment. All supplements need to be taken atleast an hour away from pharmaceutical medications to allow maximum absorption.
4. Please be aware, a minimal number of clients may experience only a small improvement or change in their symptoms after the first treatment. This is rare, however, in these instances, it is found that these clients will normally experience a more noticeable improvement after the second treatment. If you fall into this category and are questioning whether it is worthwhile attending a second treatment, please feel free to contact Dayna to discuss this.

FASCIA/CONNECTIVE TISSUE ANATOMY

I have been asked a number of times for more specific detail in relation to the Bowen Therapy move and the way it impacts on the Connective Tissue, which is why I have added this additional information. It needs to be noted that Tom Bowen never wrote theory behind the Bowen Therapy move. He imparted his knowledge and therapy through ‘hands on’ training of a few lucky therapists before his passing. The following information has been gleaned from research into the Bowen move. To better understand the impact on physiological and structural areas of the body, many studies have been conducted and the below is a summary of the discoveries made from this research. Most of this information has been obtained from the WA School of Bowen therapy (Fascial Kinetics) manual.

Fascia is a tissue that surrounds every structure in the body and is one continuous tissue. Hence, where connective tissue gets its name! It acts as a conduit between all the structures and is, put quite simply, amazing!

Dehydrated fascia contains layers of collagen that have ‘collapsed’ upon one another. In hydrated fascia there are ‘tree like’ structures known as Proteoglycans (PG’s) and Glycosaminoglycan’s (GAG’s) that maintain a critical distance between these collagen layers and attract water to their branches, maintaining the hydration of the collagen/fascia. When this fascia becomes dehydrated, these PG’s/GAG’s collapse down and this allows the collagen layers to become ‘glued’ or dehydrated.

The Bowen Therapy move reverses this process. The Bowen Therapy move is a cross fibre, two way move. The first part of the move actively pulls the collagen layers apart, whilst the second part of the Bowen move causes a piezoelectric effect on the tree -like structures (PG’s and GAG’s). This action causes the tree-like structures to assume their correct positioning between the collagen layers maintaining distance between these and attracting water to the collagen, hence, rehydrating the fascia as a whole.

It needs to be stressed that this explains the impact on a physiological level only. In the alternative field of therapy, it is believed that Bowen Therapy impacts on many different levels, however as this is purely explaining the Anatomy of Connective Tissue I won’t elaborate any further on this component of the Therapy.