

# The Bowen Technique National Migraine Research Program

October 2001 to April 2002  
by Nikke Ariff (Tel: 07941 417441)

## **Aim:**

The National Research program was launched by Nikke Ariff in response to results obtained in an earlier Pilot Scheme she carried out between February – April 2001 where 80% of the Migraine volunteers responded with positive results to Bowen. The National Research program was then launched to determine the efficacy of The Bowen Technique in the treatment of the Migraine condition. The Research program was not aiming to record any changes in the volunteer's Migraine pattern according to frequency and severity over a given period after receiving Bowen treatments.

## **Selection of candidates: The Volunteer Group**

No parameters were set before the research program to attract a certain 'profile' of Migraine sufferer. This was deliberate to ensure that the Volunteer Group was random but united by the fact that they were willing to try something new in the treatment of their Migraine condition.

## **Selection of candidates:**

The Research Group was recruited from the members of the Migraine Action Association and based on a considered selection of participants on the basis:

- They were diagnosed as a migraine sufferer by a Gp or hospital specialist
- The women volunteers were well represented at different stages of their menstrual life ie. Regular periods, pre menopausal, menopausal with / without hormone therapy, post-menopausal, hysterectomy.

## *The Volunteer Group: Profile*

Of the 39 Volunteers : 37 women, 2 men

*Length of time been a Migraine sufferer:*

1 to 15yrs : 13 volunteers , 16 to 30 yrs: 17 volunteers, over 30 yrs: 9 volunteers

## **The Therapists**

All were fully qualified in the Bowen technique and fulfilled the qualifications set out by the governing body The Bowen Therapists European Register ([www.bter.org](http://www.bter.org) email: info@bter.org).

## **The Research Program:**

The Program was carried out over a 6 week period. This comprised of a two week treatment period during which the Volunteer received three Bowen treatments. Followed by a four week observational period. The Migraine Volunteer kept a migraine diary throughout the 6 week period.

## **The Results of the Bowen Technique National Migraine Research Program**

Of the 39 participants:

7 registered No Change in their Migraine condition

11 experienced a Decrease in frequency of attacks

9 experienced a decrease in severity of their Migraine

11 experienced a decrease in severity and frequency of attacks

1 participant experienced an increase in frequency

In all, 31 case studies experienced a positive result, yielding a response rate of 79.5%.

### **Attitude towards The Bowen Technique at the end of the program:**

36 of the 39 Volunteers said they would recommend Bowen as a treatment.

Below are quotes from some of the Migraine Volunteers:

“I have had more energy and Migraine-free time”.

“I have been so used to frequent Migraines , I can't quite mentally adjust to not having pain.”

“The most relaxing and enjoyable of any treatments I have previously tried.”

“After the 2<sup>nd</sup> treatment, I had 9 days without Migraines which was wonderful.”

“I feel I am more calm since having the treatment.”

“I do not feel Migraine is now inevitable.”

“I generally feel improvement & that I might be able to find relief or a cure for my Migraines other than taking medication.”

“During treatment, my attacks were less severe and shorter and I was able to get back to work a lot quicker.”

“I feel more able to participate in activities without fear of an attack.”

“I feel more relaxed and don't feel my migraines rules my life anymore.”

“I am extremely happy with the outcome and will probably continue a maintenance treatment as it was so pleasant and relaxed me, which I feel I need.”

“Pain lasts a shorter time. I feel better quicker, so not so 'fragile' for so long.”

### **The Bowen technique:**

Bowen is a gentle, non-invasive, 'hands-on' therapy. It treats the body as a single integrated system and is therefore suitable for all ages from new born babies to the very elderly, from the fit and active to the critically ill. The practitioner uses thumbs and fingers on precise points around the body to make rolling type movements. The pressure used is light, never more than what your eyeball could comfortably bear. It is a distinctive feature of Bowen that after a sequence of moves, the practitioner leaves the room for a minimum of two minutes to allow your body to respond to and process the moves.

## **Mind Body Positive Ltd :**

Following the results, Nikke Ariff of “Mind Body Positive Ltd” concluded:

"I decided to use the Migraine condition as a research project (although it could have been one of many other conditions), because of the distress I saw it causing the sufferer.

My experience with Migraine proved that the Bowen Technique was very effective because it treated the person as a whole where the Migraine condition can be caused by one or a combination of several trigger factors - none of which are easily identifiable.

I am very pleased and not at all surprised at the success rate of the National Research Programme, which has recorded positive results for 31 of the 39 Migraine Volunteers. I trust that more people will be encouraged to approach complementary therapies with an open mind for the maintenance of their health and well being."

### **The Migraine Action Association:**

Ann Turner, Director for the Migraine Action Association writes “The results from the Bowen Technique National Migraine Research Programme are very encouraging. It confirms that this gentle, non-invasive, holistic therapy can help a wide range of migraine sufferers. The results confirm the findings of the pilot study and the fact that several different therapists were involved illustrates that it is the Bowen Technique which is effective not just one skilled or gifted practitioner.”

#### **Case study:**

Kay started having Migraines from when she was 10 years old, she is now 49 years of age.

“About two years ago, my migraines became more frequent until they were every three to five weeks, and lasting three days. I heard about a research program on the effects of the Bowen

Technique and, although sceptical, I really needed help, so I applied. I had three treatments over a two-week period and was amazed how the treatment relaxed me. I kept a migraine diary and didn't have another attack for seven weeks – the longest period in years! Then I had three mild ones, three weeks apart, but they were mild enough to cope with daily tasks.

'Five weeks later, I hadn't had another attack. I feel optimistic because of the distinct change in pattern and severity of my migraines. I cope much better with daily life. My general health has improved and I've lost that "woolly headed" feeling. I will definitely have more Bowen treatments if the migraines return.'

**Conclusion:**

The results are very positive. As a holistic therapy, Bowen treats the individual as an integrated biodynamic system as opposed to an isolated ailment. Migraines can be triggered by any one or a combination of factors ranging from hormonal, sleeping patterns, neck and jaw tightness, exercise, travel, lack of food, allergies and stress levels of the individual. These factors are so varied, that a holistic therapy like Bowen must be considered as a valid option for the treatment of the Migraine condition.

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