

## The Bowen Technique

The Bowen Technique is a holistic, remedial therapy tool. It differs from many other forms of therapy in that it does no attempt to inflict the will of the therapist or a specific outcome onto the patient. Instead, it offers the body an opportunity to restore structural integrity. There is no situation where it cannot be used safely and to good effect. People of every age can be treated: newborn babies, geriatrics and everyone in between.

The technique consists of a series of moves across muscle, tendon and other soft tissue. The therapist's fingers or thumbs apply gentle pressure to effect a movement of the tissue. There is no use of HVTs, hard tissue manipulation, deep or prolonged pressure, massage and oils, or specific equipment.

Practitioners do not make claims, diagnose nor treat specific conditions. The person is treated not the problem. Some common presentations, though, that respond well are uncomplicated back and neck pain, frozen shoulder, sports injuries, hay fever, asthma and migraines.

Mr Tom Bowen of Geelong, Australia developed the technique over a number of years. It is not known how he came by his remarkable talents. He never studied medicine or any formal therapy. He did

For more information on The Bowen Technique:  
[www.thebowentechnique.com](http://www.thebowentechnique.com)

The European College of Bowen Studies  
38 Portway  
Frome  
Somerset  
BA11 1QU

Tel: 01373 461 873

observe, however, many sports trainers and worked on greyhounds and racehorses before transferring his attentions to humans.

Bowen's approach was based on understanding what patients really needed. His work was so unique and special because of his deep intuition. His colleagues, who later became his disciples, all had different views of the work he was doing. Bowen possibly altered his technique with different patients. A master can do this because the technique and understanding of it are coming from his mind. The poor disciple may not see the whole picture, only part of it, and develop a system as he sees it, without the glorious insights of the one he has copied.

The technique is developing into something that was perhaps not originally intended. It has become formalised into a structured format to gain recognition from bureaucratic regulatory authorities in their drive to have evidence based outcomes. The Bowen Technique has become establishment. Bowen himself was certainly not establishment and was rejected by it for using the word osteopath, even though he had thousands of successful treatments. Pioneers like Bowen need unfettered space to develop and those copying his techniques can hopefully find that space.

Alan Borthwick