

Physical Homeopathy

The Principle of Bowen Therapy

© By Victoria Bowmann, Ph.D., USA

“Dynamis” is the term Samuel Hahnemann, M.D. used to describe the spiritual vital force that animates the material body. It is derived from the Greek language which is “the inherent power; a power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth.”

In creating remedies, Dr. Hahnemann generated this dynamis by the dilution and succussion of material substances into an energetically active medicinal remedy. Those who use homeopathy realize the power of that which is infinitesimally small. In fact, the smaller or more diluted it is, the greater the power.

Remedies which are lower doses, such as 6X or even 30C are often taught as remedies for physical maladies; and those remedies which are the higher doses, such as the 200C and 1M are used more frequently for constitutional prescribing. This addresses the mental and emotional components of the person's homeopathic picture as well as the physical symptoms.

The Australian therapy developed by Tom Bowen in the 1960s which carries his name is often spoken of as physical homeopathy. It follows the principle of “dynamis” from both the practitioner and the recipient. The practitioner is exerting a gentle, subtle force which activates the inherent power residing within the recipient. Although the touch is quite gentle and often leads a patient to think that nothing is happening; in fact, great movement of energy often occurs.

If we were to think of an iceberg, 90% of the structure is underwater. If a movement were evident at the top of the iceberg, a 9-fold greater movement would be activated at the very bottom.

When the move, or pluck as it is often described, is administered to the muscle, the proprioceptors are stimulated. Since these are deep in the tissues, it is like the iceberg, with a mathematical impact of energy. This frequency is then transmitted to the brain which recognizes the unbalanced state and begins to make the necessary adjustments.

This idea is much like a musician plucking a guitar string to hear the sound, and then turning the key at the top of the guitar's neck to adjust the string to the correct length thereby generating a pleasant, pitched tone. When the guitar string is plucked or strummed, the frequency emitted is due to the vibration of the string. If one were to leave the string undisturbed, the vibration would continue even after the human ears were unable to detect sound. This continuous flow of undisturbed energy begins an “unraveling” on stress, injury, and tension held in the muscles.

There is evidence through Heart Rate Variability (HRV) that early findings show Bowen Therapy has a balancing effect on the autonomic nervous system (ANS). This work was done at the Bowen Research and Training Institute in Palm Harbor, Florida by Jo Anne Whitaker, M.D. and presented to the International Association of New Science and the American Academy of Environmental Medicine.

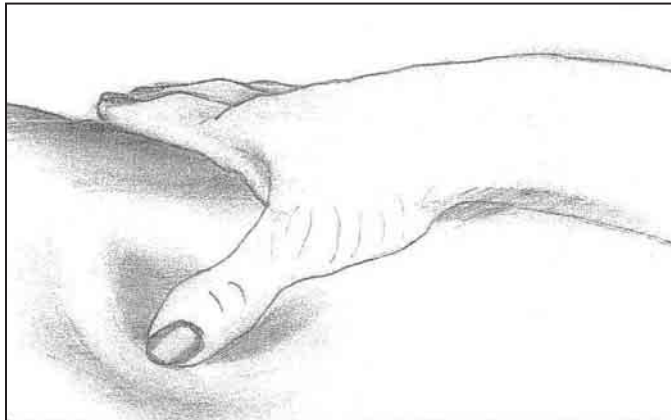
In addition to the effects on the ANS, this dynamic system of muscle and connective tissue therapy balances and stimulates energy flows, reduces muscle spasms, increases blood supply and lymphatic drainage as it simultaneously releases body tensions. This process is not limited to physical symptoms as it also extends to emotional, cognitive, and spiritual aspects of the recipient.

Understanding “The Move”

Perhaps the most important aspect of Bowen therapy is to understand “the move”. When executing a move away from the practitioner's body we generally use the thumb. Therefore when executing a move toward the practitioner's body, we generally use two fingers. In this way, we can remain on one side of the therapy table for much of the work. It is usual for us to be on the left side of the patient when they are face down. When they are face up, we work around the table to address the neck, chest and abdomen, and extremities.

The technique can be used on the origin or the insertion of a muscle, the belly of the muscle itself, and occasionally on specific acupuncture points. There is both

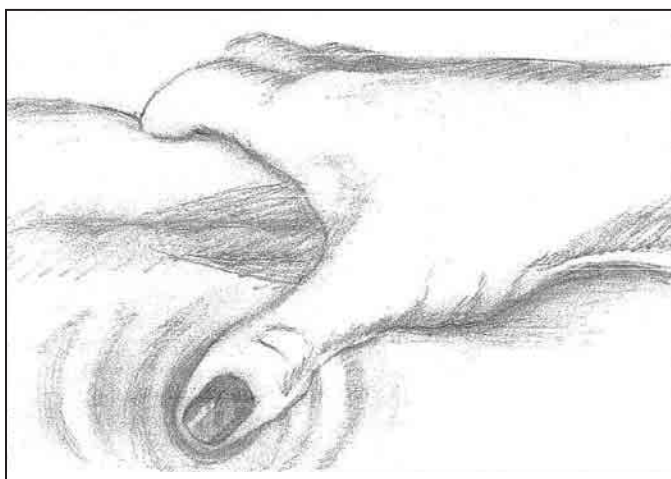
a physical action and an energetic action. Imagine a piece of cloth covering the guitar string. It is necessary to move the fabric out of our way so that we can get a hook on the string for a successful pluck thus creating our frequency which we hear as sound..



Drawing #1: The thumb is placed on top of the designated muscle (for our purposes we'll address the spinalis erectus muscle). Gently carry skin away from the spine without disturbing the muscle.



Drawing #2: Quietly hook the thumb into the lateral edge of the muscle to form a challenge or pressure against the muscle. Create a slight pause as the nervous system registers a tension which indicates "something is about to occur".



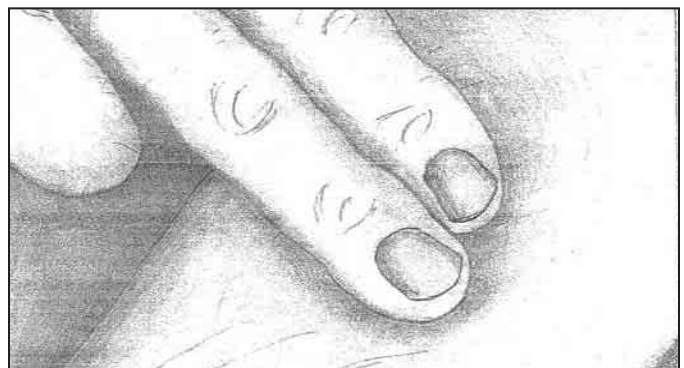
Drawing #3: As we begin to flatten the thumb in a medial direction, the muscle will pluck or plop or respond in some manner. Let's look at the same technique, but applied with the fingers on the extensor digitorum.



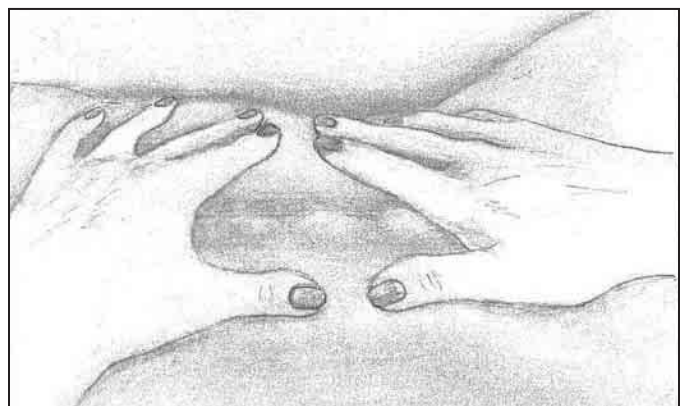
Drawing #4: Carry skin away ...



Drawing #5: Challenge the muscle ...



Drawing #6: Flatten the fingers to pluck. In this example, a correct pluck will cause the 2nd finger to "jump".



Drawing #7: This is how we would place our hands to work both sides of the spine, first with the thumbs (left side of body) followed by the fingers (right side of body). Often, the hands are placed on the back with an inch of space between the thumbs and fingers so that the hands can play the muscles simultaneously.

In a toned body that has supple muscles, often the pluck creates a rippling effect which we can observe along the muscle and continuing to the associated connections. In an individual with adhered fascia or excessive edema or adipose tissue, the practitioner may not see and feel anything. However, the dynamic action will occur and its subtle force will activate the healing force within the individual.

The back is divided into three sections: below the waistline to address the pelvic girdle, low back and lower extremities. The mid back which is from the waistline to a line at the bottom of the shoulder blades which addresses the internal organs. Anything above the line at the bottom of the shoulder blades addresses the shoulder girdle, the upper extremities and the neck. Special moves called “dividers” are placed at these lines which keeps the energy focused in that area. These dividers dissipate with time and dissolve once we are standing. Complementary series of moves are done on both the front and back of the body.

Another principle of Bowen Therapy is the opening and closing of the work within each area. When work is begun on the back, the area is opened by executing lateral moves to the spinalis erectus muscle, left side first, followed by the right side. Specific patterns of movements are then done. When completed, medial moves are used to close the spinalis erectus muscle. This gives the brain information that our dynamic message is now complete. We then give the patient a short rest period (or pause) of about two minutes to give the brain time to register the information and begin its tuning process.

Single moves and specific patterns were developed by Mr. Bowen. However during his 30 year career, a progression of these patterns emerged as he faced more patients and greater challenges from these patients. A session can last from 20 to 40 minutes. The first two sessions are suggested about 7 to 10 days apart since the body doesn't always unravel evenly. Subsequent treatments are suggested after evaluation of progress and on an as needed basis.

Perhaps one of the attractive aspects of this technique is being user friendly for the practitioner. It doesn't require extreme pressure, leverage or strength. However it does require sufficient study, practice, specificity and consistency in the technique. Several patients can receive treatments simultaneously since the rest periods or pauses allow a practitioner to move from room to room.

It is important to note that the greater the pain a patient expresses, longer rest periods are suggested. If extreme pain or immobility presents, the work is done on the non affected side first, followed by a short (15 second pause), and then on the affected side with the lightest of moves. By thinking homeopathically, the higher the dose, the more powerful the remedy; so the lighter the Bowen touch, the more powerful the move.

A healthy athlete and larger strong muscles can handle a firm pluck, whereas an injured area, an infant or frail elderly, or a delicate muscle around our face would deserve a much lighter move.

Case #1: 61 Year Old Male

It's been about 5 years since I first came to see you with chronic lower back problems, having suffered for more than 30 years with aches, pains, and stiffness. I had 3 of your Bowen Therapy sessions, and since then, I have not experienced a single pain or problem with my lower back!

Your work is not only amazing, it effects a long-lasting healing. I want to thank you from my heart's center.

I have been involved with the natural health movement for more than 30 years, having studied and practiced various forms of massage therapy including reflexology, deep tissue massage, and Ortho-bionomy. I am also an Herbologist, Iridologist, Reiki Master, and have practiced Rudolf Steiner's Biodynamic farming principles for more than 34 years, and work with energy on a daily basis.

Your work and skill with Bowen Therapy far surpasses anything I have yet learned about the body.

Case #2: 30 Year Old Female

Presented with kidney stones, one passed, one remains. 18 hours after her treatment, the second stone passed with a minimum of pain.

Case #3 51 Year Old Male

L5-S1 degenerative disks, left leg sciatica pain, feet burn at night. He has done “lots of things”, osteopathic adjustments didn't help, his girlfriend is a licensed massage therapist, and massage hasn't helped. His work requires heavy physical exertion.

After two treatments he was feeling relief. After five sessions he said: “I'm feeling pretty good.” He returns every three to four weeks for a tune up.

Nothing happens until something moves.

Albert Einstein

The gentle power in Bowen therapy allows the elderly, the infirmed, those in pain to find relief and frequently resolution. Like homeopathy, a well chosen remedy can activate the healing principle within each of us. Although no one modality solves every problem, this “physical homeopathic” knowledge is invaluable in every practitioner's toolbox. More information regarding training and trained practitioners can be found on www.bowendirectory.com 🌸

About the Author



Victoria Bowmann has been a health care professional since 1978. She is proficient in many modalities, each designed to detoxify the body and restore a greater degree of vitality to the individual. She earned her Ph.D. in Homeopathy and Natural Medicine from Westbrook University in 1999, her doctorate in Homeopathic Medicine from the British Institute of Homeopathy in 1995. Please visit her web site at myrealhealth.com. Her private practice is in Phoenix, Arizona.