
Clinical Perspectives of Bowen Therapy-Review

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ABSTRACT

Another alternate method of treatment like bash flower therapy is the Bowen therapy. This therapy got its attention during the World War II. The history of this therapy. The soft tissue therapy is the main technique implemented by Bowen. The effectiveness and potency of this therapy is discussed.

KEYWORDS:- bash flower therapy, Bowen therapy, World War II, effectiveness, potency

INTRODUCTION

Murray Bowen's the family systems theory (shortened to 'Bowen theory' from 1974) was one of the first comprehensive theories of the family systems functioning was proposed by Bowen in the year 1966. While it has received sporadic attention in countries like Australia and New Zealand, it continues to be the central influence in the practice of family therapy in North America. It is possible that some local family therapists have been precisely influenced by many of Bowen's ideas without the connection being much articulated. For example, many scholars, researchers and physicians all have Bowenian Theory at the heart of their conceptualisations. There is a pervasive view amongst many proponents of the Bowen's work that his theory needs to be experienced rather than taught and understood. While this may be applicable if one can be immersed in the milieu of the Bowenian training institute, such an option, to my knowledge, is not available in this country. The Bowen's own writings have also been charged with being tedious and difficult to read and assessed. Hence it seems pertinent to present this influential theory in an accessible formats (Guerin et al.,1996).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL

Murray Bowen was born in the year 1913 in Tennessee and died in 1990. He trained as a psychiatrist and originally practised within the psychoanalytic models. At the Menninger Clinic in the late 1940s, he had started to precisely involve mothers in the investigation and treatment of the schizophrenic patients. His devotion to his own psychoanalytic training was set aside after his move to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in the year 1954, as he began to shift from an individual focus to an appreciation of the varying dimensions of families as systems. At the NIMH, Bowen began to encompass more family members in his research and psychotherapy with the schizophrenic patients (Guerin et al.,1987).

HISTORY

The World War II veteran Tom Bowen learned how he could relieve the suffering by moving the body in certain ways. In Victoria, place in Australia, Tom Bowen developed “The Bowen Technique” in the 1950s. Bowen called his technique as the “Soft Tissue Therapy.” Every time he had a spare moment, he would aid people, and as word of his technique and effectiveness and potency spread, people began to stop in at his home or come up to him on the streets to request treatments. The clinic Tom Bowen opened eventually became a success. Bowen’s success in the Bowen technique has been amazed both professionals and laypeople alike, although he has no formal training in healthcare. The technique of the Tom Bowen was simply described as a “gift from God.” Tom Bowen saw approximately 13,000 patients per year, according to the 1975 Australian Web Report, the majority of his practice and observation came from the inside of his head rather than from any notes, charts, journals or manuals (Guerin, 1976). He claimed an 89% success rate. An important researcher Carter evaluated 20 client’s experience based on predominantly quantitative and also qualitative interviews; a study was conducted on the use of the Bowen methods to treat the frozen shoulder patients for pain, function, and the wellbeing. All participants experienced improvement in their daily activities with a very long-standing history of the frozen shoulder. Researchers studied 120 participants who underwent the Bowen therapy improved hamstring flexibility after one session. Others found that 13 sessions of Bowen therapy elevated motor function in participants with the chronic stroke. Other researchers 15 samples who suffered from acute trapezitis that utilized conventional treatment. Along with the Bowen techniques, ultrasound, trapezitis stretching, and neck strengthening exercises were garnered. Statistically, all outcome measures were significant ($p = 0.05$) and demonstrated the

improvements for all participants. Patients with acute trapezitis benefit greatly from the Bowen techniques in terms of pain reduction, improved range of motion, and also reduced neck disability. In the study conducted by researchers, participants received precisely two sessions of either Bowen therapy or a fake procedure. After measuring the participants' pain the threshold on 10 different body sites, the researchers concluded that the Bowen therapy had inconsistent effects on the pain response (Goodnow et al.,1997).

BOWEN THERAPY FOR BACK PAIN

Whether it is once lower, mid, or upper back, it is likely that you will have some type of back pain in your lifetime. Bowen Therapy is very gentle, safe and much effective at treating many different types of back pains, because there are no forceful movements there is no risk of doing any damages to any of the body structures. And by working with the nerves, the muscles that hold the bones in place are corrected, so that the muscle and bone alignment is Addressed (Fig-1)



Fig: 1

By addressing both the muscles and bone alignment, relief can be experienced for longer, making Bowen Therapy one of the most cost effective treatments for the back pain around. Some of the back complains which are quiet effectively remediated with Bowen Therapists are:

- Disc Bulges or the Herniations
- Muscular strains or ligament strains
- Pinched Nerves
- Facet Joints
- Arthritis
- Sciatica Pain
- After the car accident
- Scoliosis
- Sacroiliac joint pain
- During pregnancy or after giving birth to child
- The Muscle spasms(Flaskas,1993)
- From playing sports and Stretching, yoga, or walking are things one can do at home to help relieve back pain to begin with (Fig-2).



Fig: 2

If back pain is persistent it's a good idea to get some specific treatment without leaving it too long. The earlier back pain can be treated; typically the faster the lasting relief will be experienced. Back pain may be treated effectively by the Bowen Therapy, since it works to increase circulation to the damaged structures and tissues to precisely facilitate faster healing and relieve the pain. In very much severe cases, the nerve endings in the spine can be frozen by doctors to provide relief, and in extreme cases, the surgery might be performed which involves fusion of joints.

HIP PAIN

The symptoms of the hip pain can vary greatly between clients, The pain may be experienced around different areas of the hips, and may mainly radiate out to different areas, depending on the underlying cause of the pain. As with the most injuries, earlier treatment leads to faster recovery times. Using Bowen Therapy physicians work to correct the alignment of the hip and surrounding structures to correct the underlying the cause of hip pain. Since the hips are the base that holds your entire upper body, it is quiet important that they are aligned correctly to prevent compensations and allied pain higher in the body (Carter et al.,1996).

ARTHRITIS

Treatment for Arthritis

With thwrheumatoid arthritis, the earlier one seeks treatment the better. Since the lack of synovial fluid in the joint is causing a lot of wear and tear to the cartilages within the joint, the earlier proper functioning is restored to the joints, the less structural damage that will be sustained to the cartilage and bony structures within the joints. Bowen Therapy can be very effective, as it works through the body's fascial systems, an extension of the nervous system to help correct the root cause - the nervous systems attacking the lining of the joints. If one is suffering from the osteoarthritis, Bowen Therapy is unable to restore the damaged joints cartilage or underlying the bone damage; however it can be effective at relieving the pain associated with the osteoarthritis as well as improve joint functionality and mobility. Other treatment options that may be offered by a doctor to garner relief from joint pain and functionality are analgesics which can relieve pain but not garner any relief from inflammation, or NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) that can be mainly prescribed that target both symptoms. The NSAIDs may have side-effects though, like increasing your risk of heart attacks or stroke. Creams and also ointments can also be applied

to help alleviate symptoms caused by Arthritis. The Corticosteroids may also be administered to suppress the immune system. When conservative measure prove to be quiet ineffective. Surgery can involve joint repair where the surfaces of joints are made precisely smooth to improve function, joint replacement like that of the hips or knees or the joint fusion for smaller joints to stop the joint moving all together (Carter et al.,1991).

WORKING OF BOWEN THERAPY

Bowen Therapy works on a number of levels – the musculo-skeletal, chemical (or metabolic) and emotional. With primarily fingers and also thumbs, the Bowen practitioner makes small, rolling movements (the Bowen ‘Move’) over muscles, the tendons, ligaments and soft tissue at precise points on the body, availing only the amount of pressure appropriate for that individual. No hard-tissue manipulation or force is needed or availed (Carter,1988). It has been hypothesised that the Bowen move induces largely a piezoelectric* effect within the fascia. Researchers suggested this effect increased the rate of production of collagen fibres within the fascia, so promoting healing. However more recent research indicates that moves undertaken over sites in the body where there are enormous mechanoreceptors have a therapeutic effect on the fascia. Whatever mechanism the body is availing to respond to the move, the therapy aims to aid the body naturally gravitate to a position of homeostasis and balance. Rather than 'making' the body change, Bowen 'asks' the body to mainly recognise and make the changes it requires to mainly achieve that balance on whatever level it requires. This has been demonstrated through the feedback of BTPA clients where they mainly show, time after time, that several problems will resolve after Bowen Therapy, not just perhaps the one that was their main concern (Carter et al.,1988).

BOWEN’S FINDINGS

Triangles Bowen delineated triangles as the smallest stable relationship unit (Kerr and Bowen, 1988: 135). The process of the triangling is central to his theory. (Some people use the term 'triangulation', but Bowen always spoke of the process of 'triangling'.) Triangling is said to occur when the inevitable anxiety in a dyad is relieved by involving a vulnerable third party who either takes sides or garners a detour for the anxiety. An example of this pattern would be when Person A in a marriage begins feeling quiet uncomfortable with too much closeness to Person B. S/he may begin withdrawing, perhaps to another activity such as specific work (the third point of the triangle)(Carter et al.,1980). Person B then pursues

Person A, which results in elevated withdrawal to the initial triangled-in person or activity. Person B then feels neglected and seeks out an ally who will mainly sympathise with his/her sense of exclusion. This in turn paves to Person A feeling like the odd one out and moving anxiously closer to Person B. Under stress, the triangling process precisely feeds on itself and interlocking triangles are formed throughout the systems. This can spill over into the wider community, when family members find allies, or enemies to unite against, such as the doctors, teachers and also therapists. Under calm conditions it is difficult to identify triangles but they emerge clearly under stress. Triangles are linked quite closely with Bowen's concept of differentiation, in that the greater the degree of fusion in a relationship, much more heightened is the pull to preserve emotional stability by forming the triangle. Bowen did not suggest that the process of triangling was necessarily dysfunctional, but the entire concept is a useful way of grasping the notions that the original tension gets acted out elsewhere (Carter,1992). Triangling can become mainly problematic when a third party's involvement distracts the members of the dyad from resolving their relationship impasse. If a third party is drawn in, the focus shifts to criticising or mainly worrying about the new outsider, which in turn prevents the original complainants from resolving their tensions. According to Bowen, triangles tend to repeat themselves across generations. When one member of a relationship triangle departs or precisely dies, another person can be drawn into the same role (eg. 'villain', 'rescuer', 'victim', 'the black sheep', 'martyr'). For example, in my own family of origin I found myself moving into the role of the peacemaker after the death of my mother, who had mediated the tension between my father and the brother. This ongoing triangle served to detour the anxiety that had been played out between fathers and the sons in the family over the generations. (Carter,1991)

NEW INNOVATIVE AND INTEGRATED THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES

Ayurveda is one among the medicine practices(S.Sreeremya,2022) which can be integrated with other modern medicines and also can integrate chiropractic technique(Dr. S. Sreeremya,2024a).Modern day pharmacology(Dr. S. Sreeremya,2024) and categories like paediatric pharmacology and geriatric pharmacology has to be deeply assessed(Dr. S. Sreeremya,2019b).Even the molecular level assessment using RNA nano-design is a forward step in nano-medicine (Dr. S. Sreeremya,2019a).The gene level assessment and further analysis of the human body paves new possibilities in the field of diagnosis(Dr. S.

Sreeremya,2025). Usage of new nanomaterials and its updation makes this field ignited scientifically (S.Sreeremya,2018c).

The history of biotechnology (Dr. S. Sreeremya,2024b) and history of pharmacology paves the way for the new innovations (Dr.S.Sreeremya,2024c).Even for geriatric patients, there are set of treatments and medications (Dr. S. Sreeremya,2019c). Nanotechnology can be used in various aspects (S.Sreeremya2017), apart from medicinal filed like waste water treatment (S.Sreeremya,2018a) and it can be used for sustainable approaches (S.Sreeremya,2018b). Bach flower is another important therapy (Dr. S. Sreeremya,2025) like plasma treatment and ozone therapy (Dr. S. Sreeremya,2025a)which has the ability to remediate illness (Dr.S. Sreeremya,2024).

CONCLUSION

Bowen Therapy is very much gentle, safe and much effective at treating many different types of back pains, there are no forceful movements there is no risk of doing any damages to any of the body structures. And by working with the neurons and neural innervations, the muscles that hold the bones in place are corrected. The triangulation also plays a main role in Bowen therapy.

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