



The author, Mary Gutsell, lives in New London, NH and has been a Professional Bowenwork Practitioner since May, 2005. This is a picture of her automobile license plate. Mary has this as her plate because she feels everyone is “happier” after having a Bowenwork® session!

Angela’s Story from Mary Gutsell - Bowenwork Practitioner in New Hampshire, USA

When I first met Angela I knew Bowenwork could help her with all her medical problems that she was experiencing at such a young age. After knowing her for about six months she finally set up an appointment and began treatment. I made sure she understood that healing is a process, sometimes difficult and sometimes taking a bit of time. I also asked for assurance that she was willing to live a life without all the physical ailments that had been a big part of her life. I knew from experience that doing only, if not part, of the BRMs would be possible, and that less was definitely going to be better. After turning her supine on the first session her neck moved from side to side involuntarily, causing her some concern. I assured her that it was part of the body’s way of integrating the messages of the Bowenwork moves. I told her I could stop the process at any time but that I preferred to let it do its thing, if she was comfortable with the movement. We let the head continue moving for more than half an hour and then turned her on her side in a fetal position. She was sore the next day, but from that point on she has made great progress in working with her conditions. The involuntary movements that the body makes after Bowenwork moves can be considered ‘Psychophysical Reeducation’ as termed in Listening To The Body by Robert Masters Phd. And Jean Houston Phd. “Psychophysical Reeducation is a neural reeducation which makes the nervous system demonstrably more responsive and amenable to change. Psychophysical exercises are in part effective communications to the brain, specifying bodily changes which the brain can and will effect in response to the appropriate stimulus.” Bowenwork is the stimulus to change in all parts of the body.

Angela’s words:

Sunday afternoon... I laid flat on my back, my head moved from side to side involuntarily and my body went into a whole rhythm of movements that seemed completely choreographed and were also spontaneous. To the unknowing the whole scene probably would have appeared quite strange actually. I couldn’t help but think that I must look silly or like I was possessed... I chuckled a little at this thought and I cracked myself up. I reached for my phone a few times trying not to panic but thought of calling someone. Lucky for me my husband was home and I knew he wouldn’t let anything happen to me. He fully supported me. Besides, we both figured out exactly what was going on and knew that my body wouldn’t do anything to harm itself. The mind and body can be more powerful beyond belief, and when healing... the unexpected may become more of a reality. This is my BOWEN experience.

In this write-up I will describe my most current and incredible Bowen experience. In order to get a complete understanding of my experience I think it is necessary to have a little bit of an understanding of the trauma my body has encountered and the need let some of that go.

I had been active and healthy the majority of my life. As a child I always got plenty of fresh air, I loved to swim in the ocean and I actively participated in playing organized sports. While I was always striving for reassurance and perfection, I was an adventurous type and so it should come as no surprise that I was also no stranger to bumps and bruises. It always amazed me how I could be coordinated enough to play a fast paced game of soccer remaining on my feet the whole time... but somehow lost that coordination when it came to walking normally from point A to point B—kindly said, I was a bit of a klutz.

My active days came to a slight halt around my 21st birthday. After a random incident of knee pain and swelling, surgery was necessary to remove some damaged cartilage. I recovered from the simple surgery with no complications, but the swelling remained in my knee. A number of anti-inflammatory drugs, specialists and tests lead to the prognosis of moderate to severe rapidly progressing Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA). Within a months time I went from a swollen knee to complete inflammation of six of my largest joints along with udder pain from head to toe. I slept the majority of my days barely possibly able to even get out of bed.

I remember the days of the pain and swelling quite well. My weakest moments were almost 5 years ago. I am currently medicated to suppress the inflammatory disease of my immune system and am doing quite well actually and living a very normal day to day life.

About a year ago this wasn't enough. While I was doing very well for someone in my condition I still had pain in my neck and lower back from time to time and my body was completely out of alignment. I participated in a number of daily activities and held a full time job, but was always more fatigued than the average person and found it difficult to get through some days. After everything I had been through I was open to trying a more natural approach to healing. This is where my Bowen therapy came into play.

Even in my first Bowen session ever my body showed a welcoming response to the therapy. Not too long into the session as I laid flat on my back my head began to move from side to side involuntarily. Sometimes these movements would be very tight and controlled while other times they were much looser in feeling and my neck would roll deep towards one shoulder then the other and back again. From that day on my head still moves back and forth from side to side at almost every session.

More recently my Bowen experiences have branched out from my normal body work session to an occasional moment a few days later as my body is still processing the therapy. For me a typical Bowen experience is signified by a severe feeling of nausea. followed by some movement of my head and neck. When I recognize these signs I try to start drinking a surplus of water and when possible I try to lay down and relax. My first experience like this took place as a passenger in a car. As I started to feel sick I sipped on a bottle of water. My head and neck jerked hard to the right and was stuck there for several minutes. After some deep breathing and sipping of water I heard a very loud pop (which was apparently all internally as the person sitting next to me never heard anything) and my neck snapped back into place. Feeling more aligned overall the weight of that experience lifted and I no longer felt nauseated.

As I continue to figure out how my body reacts to the therapy I recognize signs of a Bowen experience and do my best to allow that experience to occur. Not long ago it was a Sunday afternoon, three days after my most recent Bowen session. I was home like I usually am relaxing and preparing myself for the week ahead. At about 2pm in the afternoon I started to feel the sever pang of nausea and light-

headedness. I grabbed a bottle of water from the fridge and started to sip slowly as I sat on the couch. I laid my head back against a cushion and my husband suggested I go lie down in the bedroom where I would be more comfortable. Just as I rested my head against the pillow my head began fighting the puffiness of the pillow and started to move back and forth. My first thought was, "Oh... I know what's happening now." With a deep breath I removed the pillow from behind head and laid flat. I called to my husband so he was aware of what was going on and could keep an eye on me. He was there to make sure I was going to be alright, to bring me more water, and to cover me with more blankets as my body temperature dropped and I became cold.

With every deep breath I took my head moved back and forth and back and forth. This, I was used to and knew what to expect. Then what happened next I wasn't familiar with. The movements my head was doing would get very very tight and as it did my whole body would tense up and almost raise me off from the bed by my heels and shoulder blades. My body remained in this tight position for as long as I could stand it. Then as if my body knew I was having enough it would relax in such a state that it was in complete contrast to the tightening. My whole body relaxed and sunk deeply into the bed holding this movement for a second then returning to its normal state. Again my head would begin to move and the cycle started all over. My body was healing... what a breakthrough for the Bowen!

I hated to get up and disrupt the process but periodically I would call to my husband to assist me to the bathroom door after all the water I had drank. Then, I would return to my position in the bed and the process would continue. About half way through the movements not only included my head and neck and the central core of my body, my left arm began a set of movements all its own and setting itself back towards my shoulder blade as if it was trying to correct my posture. Each time I stood up I was standing straight as if my back had a board attached to it.

After about an hour and a half I began to feel very weak like I had run a marathon, I was worn out and didn't know how much more I could take. I positioned myself on my right side in the fetal position. My left arm still made the movements for a few more minutes then everything subsided. I was able to rest for about 45mins on my side and regained my composure. As I got myself out of bed I noticed how straight I was standing overall. My nausea had once again vanished as quickly as it appeared and I felt awake and energized.

The next day I was a little sore, but a good sore, as I am after all my Bowen sessions. Whatever my body was working through that day it must have been something big. It has been almost a year now since I started receiving Bowen. It appears that my body is finally releasing some of the trauma it has been holding on to for so long. As I continue with my Bowen I find that I am dealing with stress better and feeling more energetic and happy and in less pain on a day to day basis. I am able to exercise regularly and walk a few miles at a time. For me and my arthritis this is huge! While I am still medicated to suppress the arthritis and and this will remain for now, Bowen has taken self healing a step further and has given me hope, helped heal and provided me with the ability to greater pursue a normal healthy life. If there is one thing I have learned, it is that the body and mind are incredibly powerful when enabled and anything is possible. I am not ruling out the idea that maybe some my arthritis will go into remission and I'll be med free.

This is my Bowen experience at the age of 25.