

Bowen for Bear Grylls

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Bear Grylls – Men vs Wild with Will Ferrell

Intrepid adventurer Bear Grylls has a rather surprising ally in his efforts to stay at peak physical performance – the gentle complementary therapy called the Bowen Technique. Bear is Channel 4's 'Born Survivor' who is dropped into hostile locations and has to make his own way back to civilisation. His everyday life consists of jumping out of planes, diving into icy water, walking for days through the desert and climbing mountains.

Whenever he returns from his exploits in hostile environments around the world, Bear has regular treatments with Sussex based Bowen therapist Sarah Yearsley, and now regards these as an essential part of his preparation.

Bowen Therapy is an alternative form of massage therapy that uses gentle touches to encourage the body to actively engage its own healing ability. Originally founded by Aussie Tom Bowen (1916 – 1982), it involves the use of thumbs and fingers, with gentle rolling movements over muscles and tendons at precise points. The process releases energy, sending impulses to the brain to trigger the body's own healing systems. It is particularly effective in correcting muscular and skeletal imbalances.

What can appear quite strange is that the practitioner leaves the room after each series of movements, but this is to allow the body to initiate its healing process. Rather than 'making' the body change, Bowen 'asks' the body to recognise and make the changes it requires. The Bowen Technique is a natural, non-invasive therapy with a very broad spectrum of application including chronic back pain, frozen shoulder, sports injuries, whiplash, migraine and asthma. It is suitable for all age groups.

Bear Grylls says, 'Bowen has helped keep my body together despite the continual bashing it takes. 'It's a vital support in putting right a whole range of new aches and pains, making sure that old injuries don't cause me problems, and helping me fight stress and fatigue.'

The specific symptoms Sarah has helped Bear to overcome include a rotated pelvis, tight and shallow breathing, a strained calf muscle, extreme exhaustion and stress, and a toe injury. 'Bear provides a perfect illustration of the amazing versatility of Bowen,' she comments, 'It helps him across a full range of symptoms – not only alleviating pain but boosting his immune system and helping minimise fatigue. Of course, he isn't a typical patient, but most of his problems are no different from those I treat in people with normal lifestyles.'

A Bowen treatment normally takes between 45 minutes to an hour, and includes periods when the therapist stops to allow the treatment to take full effect. Therapists in the UK are regulated by the Bowen Therapy Professional Association which helps ensure high standards of practice and a code of conduct.

Bowen TPA, www.bowentherapy.org.uk