

Choice

Health & Wellbeing

ISSN 2041-7780 Issue 15 Feb/Mar 12 £3.50




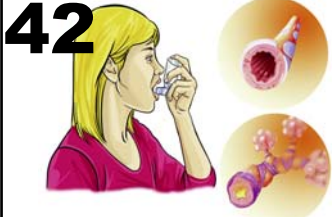
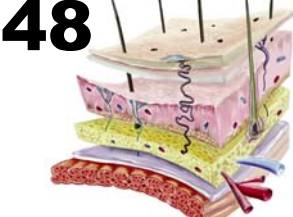
www.choicehealthmag.com

The Leading Publication for Complementary Health, Education and Wellbeing

Homeopathy

for babies and children

In this issue:

Carrier Oils	Asthma	Repairing skin damage
6 	42 	48 

Your Health and Wellbeing Success Starts Here!

Are you a health-conscious consumer, looking to come into the industry or looking for a suitable treatment? Find out what the experts say and read.

A step closer toward self-acceptance



A life-changing experience

By Lynn Rae LMT Cancer Survivor London, England 2011

Lynn believes her experience demonstrates the effects of massage therapy on the physical and also the indirect impact it could have on the emotional and psychological state of any client.

Lynn read about massage therapist Paul Lewis and before sitting through any of his lectures or taking his workshop she got first-hand experience of his techniques and approaches. Paul presents workshops and lectures on a variety of advanced massage therapy subjects. His techniques help to augment the therapist's current treatments making it unique for both the therapist and client.

Lynn writes:

I was diagnosed with right-side invasive breast cancer on 23 December 2008. I was expecting this diagnosis as my mother died from breast cancer at a young age of 63, but I was not expecting to need a mastectomy. As a divorced, 46-year-old mother of two, my first thought was how am I going to convince my beloved teenagers that I am not going to die and my second, was how will I survive with only one breast?

As a mother, the protective instinct took over and it was easier to focus all my attention on the welfare of my children and the doctors could take care of me.

After the sentinel node biopsy came back positive, a full lymph clearance on the right became necessary. A visit to the plastic surgeons and I was persuaded that the best option for me was to have post-surgical reconstruction using an S-Gap flap. Using fat from one buttock to

reconstruct the breast, this procedure would be a highly complex and a relatively new surgery. It would take 12 hours, but I was assured that I would be thrilled with the natural appearance and feel of the result. In addition my buttock would appear flattened on one side but this could be evened out at a later date using liposuction on the other side.

Waking up from surgery with two breasts was vital for me to be able to cope with the mastectomy and I was pretty impressed with the result.

Recovery was painful, mainly on the left side of the ribcage where I must have been twisted on the operating table.

My work as a massage therapist proved to be too physical and so I was forced to focus more on teaching Pilates and body movement. This amazingly helped me to rebalance both my mind and body. It became vital for my mental wellbeing that I regained my strength and balance within my body also.

Two and a half years later, I am now physically fit and strong, I have had an implant put in under my existing breast on the left side to give balance bilaterally. My nipple on the right was created using a skin graft. I feel like a woman when fully clothed although still working on the undressed version.

Physically, I have a lot of scar tissue and reduced sensation in and around the right axilla,

tightness and scarring of the right pectoral muscle, tenderness on my sternum and I have a scoliosis on the right –concavity around the mid thoracic and a rib that shifts to the right. My pelvis twists and rotates constantly due to muscle imbalance and I have a lot of tightness in my SI joint particularly the right side. On a positive note, I have been able to rebuild a lot of the gluteal and hip muscles on the right with precise strengthening and I keep the imbalances at bay to a reasonable extent with yoga and Pilates.

Since my surgery, I have minimal hands-on bodywork, partly due to insecurities about my body after surgery and partly due to not wanting to trust therapists.

I heard about Paul Lewis and his approach to treating mobility issues relating to post-mastectomy and reconstruction surgery. I felt I would be in safe hands even before we met. His manner, knowledge and care put me at ease, and the treatment from start to finish was sensitive and holistic. He looked at my body as a whole, which was something that none of the doctors at the hospital did. His treatment did not just cover the post-surgical breast area but also my legs, buttocks, stomach, back, arms, shoulders, even the face. All areas that were connected in some way to the surgeries and procedures I have undergone in the past two and a half years.

After the therapeutic massage, I felt physically rejuvenated, my muscles and joints were relaxed and emotionally nurtured. I also felt a new level of acceptance of my body, having exposed it to someone who was not my doctor.

Overall I think it is wise to have massage from someone who is knowledgeable on the subject and who has treated many others in similar situations. A therapist who understands physically, emotionally and holistically can be a very powerful and healing experience. Also, although the massage was relaxing, it felt deep and the fact that Paul treats the body as a whole helped me to re-integrate myself and revisit areas I felt previously blocked. I no longer view my body in two parts; areas directly affected and other areas.

Paul Lewis had a short lecture schedule in London, England, and I would have liked to have had more treatments had it been possible, but I can see from just having one, the amazing benefits that a course of treatments would have. I have met many other women suffering from breast cancer since my diagnosis and one of the main feelings that seem to affect us is that the whole medical process is rather like having an out of body experience, as if it were happening to someone else. Being able to have a treatment from a skilled therapist helps to bring you back into your own body, which is a step towards acceptance.

Since receiving that wonderful rehabilitative post-surgical mastectomy treatment, I plan on taking some of Paul's workshops on Dynamic Angular Petrissage (DAP) next time he is in London and I am on track to getting back into treating clients again. **CHW**

© For a list of workshops by Paul Lewis offered in Europe 2012 visit www.paullewis.ca