

Cerebral Palsy Study

Over the next few editions we're going to follow the progress of a study that Camelia Pop has set up to look at the efficacy of Bowen on Cerebral Palsy. In this edition, Camelia provides some background to the study and her initial results.



Camelia Pop, Manchester

This spring I found out about a 5-year-old boy from my area whose family was raising money for expensive surgery in the USA to help him stand up. I suddenly wanted to try helping him more than with a few pounds.

At that time I didn't know what *conditions or symptoms* cerebral palsy causes in a child. I didn't know about the seizures, or the Botox they have periodically in their ankles for instance. Before contacting the mother, I looked on UK websites for information about CP and Bowen in order to send to the mum. I found a few very good cases:

- <http://www.bowen-therapy.co/Bowen/kidsclinic/testimonial2.html>
- <http://www.thebowentechnique.com/case-histories.html#9>

And I found out more myself about how other children improved their quality of life.

The child came for his first session and a few days later he was able to cross his legs for the first time in his life and was more active and brighter at school, which was a surprise for both me and his mother!

He came for another session and then went on holiday. After that they were very busy fund raising (they need about £50,000) and didn't continue with Bowen. I see now pictures of the boy and he is very happy and active, no matter the hour of the day, just like a normal child.

But this case, even though they stopped the sessions, gave me confidence that I could really help those families to have a better lift. So I decided to run a project to look at how the Bowen Technique might help their mobility and quality of life.

Publicity

The hard part was to publicise this project as newspapers and other societies wouldn't. I decided to work with 10-12 children aged between 0-14 years and offer them up to 10 sessions. All sessions are free of charge.

If any of our members know someone who could guarantee that my press release gets printed in the Manchester area it would be very helpful.

My Group

I have 5 children so far, whose mothers found me on Netmums and Facebook. My group has quite a diverse set of conditions which include:

- A mild or severe version
- seizures or not
- be quadriplegic, hemiplegic
- good, poor or very poor eyesight, etc.

Measurements

I will look at their:

- ability to walk and sit
- general coordination
- behavior
- ability to perform everyday activities
- muscle tension and muscular cramps
- tiredness
- speech

These metrics are not relevant for every child because they are very different, but at the end we'll look at how much they have improved in the relevant one. One child might still not walk but has started to play, smiles more often, be more interested in things, or have reduced seizures. It will still mean that Bowen has helped then 😊

Introducing the Children

Child #1 – Boy, 6 years old, can't sit, can't walk, but can speak and he is a happy and clever boy. This is a boy who said to his mum: "Mum I wish I could run one day like other children".

After 2 sessions – no change in his physical condition but is very happy and speaks all day long without breaks. He is full of energy

and blows his whistle a lot! I think he speaks more clearly now.

His mum was a little bit disappointed that she didn't see a change in his arms or legs but I told her to be patient. I pointed out the improvement in his emotional side, which is important and the fact that now he speaks happily all day long. That meant his brain responded to Bowen and is a good thing. He has had his 3rd session and I'll report on that in the next edition.

Child #2 – Girl, 9 years old, mild cerebral palsy, can walk, hemiplegia, left arm and leg affected, pains in the right leg when she walks more than 500m, seizures. Never sleeps during the daytime.

After the first session she fell asleep in the car on their way home! After 2 sessions there is no change in her limbs. She had just 1 seizure in the week following the second session, but her father can't link this to Bowen because she's had periods before without seizures.

I asked about her emotional level and behaviour and the response was that yes, she had a good week, happy and well behaved but maybe it's just because of school holiday. So we have to wait more until we see something happening.

She has had her 3rd session.

Child #3 – Baby Boy, 14 months old, a twin, total body involvement, can't sit on his own, happy, responsive. Left side more affected.

After the 1st session: his left hip badly rotated inwards, left leg very stiff. However he seems to be using his left hand more with his fingers moving individually and open! She thinks that's because she stopped the hips stretching*. Personally I believe that's a response, see Bowen Hands March 2012, page 18, Andra with brachial plexus palsy. I sent to mum this article.

***Note:** Some children with CP are advised to do not just exercises (physiotherapy) but also strong stretching of the hips for instance that I believe can annihilate the Bowen moves.

2nd session: the baby was very happy to see me, that's good, babies feel instinctively if you help them or if you harm them. Left leg wasn't very stiff, left hip still rotated but

maybe not so badly. He fell asleep during the session. I told the mum to do the stretching if she really wants to do it, but that it will affect the Bowen outcome. I gave her the Bowen booklet by John Wilks to understand more about Bowen and build her confidence in Bowen.

3rd session:

- the hip is not inverted anymore, and mum doesn't do any stretches!
- Legs seems to be more flexible and now he uses his left arm and hand very often.
- Fingers moving individually and he grabs toys with this hand which he didn't do before Bowen!

Child #4 - Girl, 14 years old, severe cerebral palsy, can't sit, can't walk, can't talk, just vocalizes, very sleepy, poor eyesight, doesn't want to play, smiles occasionally, but she understands what people say to her, multiple infections.

After 1st session, she slept all day and night and woke up the next day at 3pm (~27 hours)! When she woke up started vocalising very loudly (this is nearly a miracle for the parents), smiling and very alert and taking interest in her toys and surroundings. She now stretches out her legs, arches her back and stretches out her arms when waking which the parents have not seen before. They are amazed.

After 2nd session, she wasn't as active as after her first, but still vocalised a lot. She has picked up an infection and is on antibiotics, so she will have to wait for her third session.

Child #5 – Girl, 2.5 years, twin, hemiplegia left side, hydrocephalus, can't walk, can't stand, speech delayed, poor focus.

Whilst writing up her details, I found out that she is having strong manipulation every Friday for 6 Fridays, but she will finish this programme in September. We will start the study after that. In any case, I performed BRM 1m1-4 and BRM 2 m1-4 so that she got a few days of benefit from the Bowen. On the second day the girl woke later than usual. Mum very happy!

[To be continued...]

Letters to the Editor

Cerebral Palsy – Update

Camelia Pop has written in with an update on a couple of children who joined her case study later in the programme.

Child no 13 – boy 2.5 years, spastic cerebral palsy, all limbs affected, Right side worse than left side. Can't walk but can speak.

This boy had the biggest improvement after just 1 session. On the day of his first session and then the following weeks he was able to sit and play with both hands off the ground with great balance, something he has never been able to do before. Improvements in all areas: coordination, balance, less muscle tension, memory, less pains, better behaviour.



After 2 sessions he was able to build for the first time a 10 “bobbies” tower with the educational therapist. His physiotherapist was also happy with his walking as he is not crossing his legs as much as before. He uses both hands equally when performing exercises or playing.

”Bowen is changing my son’s life. Literally after every session he has within a few days started achieving new things. C has spastic cerebral palsy affecting both his legs and mildly to his arms. Within 1 session C's sleep had improved as did his balance. Now after 6 sessions C is able to kneel, his walk pattern is improving, his technique for feeding himself has improved greatly and his overall confidence in what he can now achieve is a pleasure to see. I would recommend any parent of a child with cerebral palsy to try this fabulous technique.” says his Mum.

Cerebral Palsy, Pituitary Dysfunction, epilepsy and optic Hypoplasia both eyes. No ability to walk due to low tone trunk muscles but has full control of his legs when lying down.

After 2 sessions was able for the first time in his life to move his hand in the direction of his mouth to feed himself. After 4 sessions improved his swimming style on his front, after 5 sessions he sits cross legged on the floor with support for balancing. Mum is very happy with this achievement. One of his school teachers attended his Bowen session to see this technique as she observed these changes in him, she noticed also that during the afternoons he is not as stiff as he used to be.

“The results this therapy has had for my son has been amazing. He has severe CP throughout his body and so cannot sit, stand, walk or talk but smiles beautifully! Since starting this program he has started to feed himself with a spoon, hold his head up for a lot longer, stand up straight and want to walk obviously with full assistance but the changes have been phenomenal. The future now looks fantastic, thank you“, says his Mum.



Child no. 14. Boy, 5 years old, diagnosed with Neuronal Migration Disorder leading to Severe

Cerebral Palsy Conclusions

13 children joined the Cerebral Palsy Research Project in Manchester and had between 2-10 Bowen sessions, usually 2 weeks apart. The parents rated each child against a set of 17 symptoms, which were measured throughout the study.

Example symptoms included: Ability to walk, Co-ordination, Balance, Urination control, Perform everyday activities, eyesight, Trembling, Emotional State, etc.

The following graph shows the number of children who had an improvement in a particular symptom. For instance 9 children presented a certain degree of weak interaction with the environment and/or with people. 7 out of the 9 kids had an improvement with this problem.

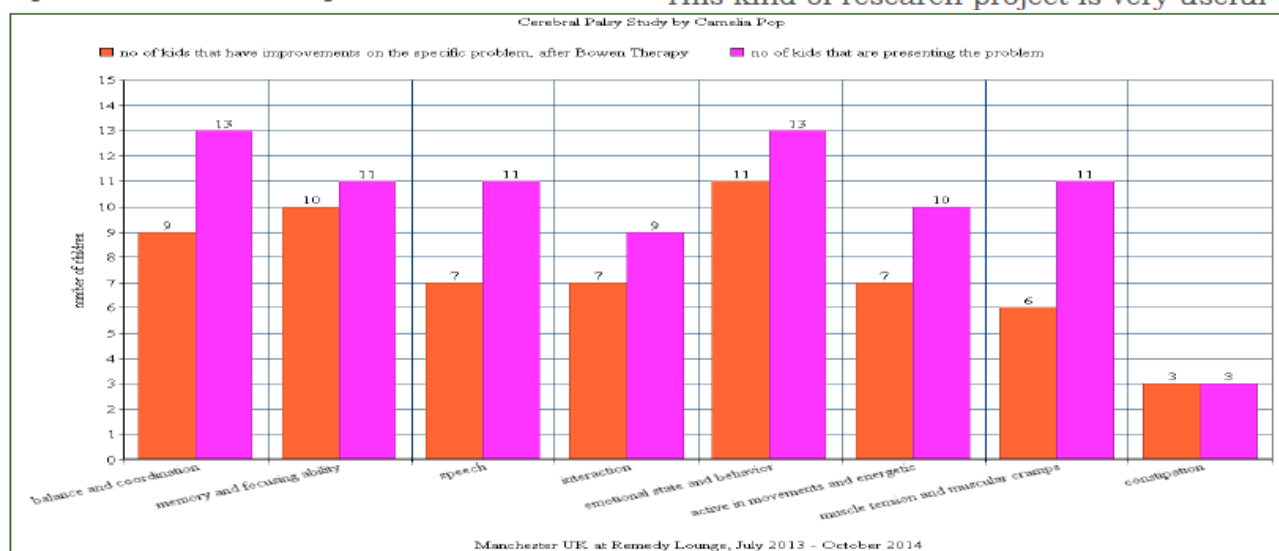
more confident, interacted more with family, teachers, and learnt more easily.

“Bowen is changing my son’s life.” – Parent.

The most rewarding part of this project happened after the project had finished - some parents decided to continue with the sessions. 2 of the kids had been told that would need hip surgery to hold the femurs in their sockets. When they went back to hospital to be re-measured and X-rayed, none of them needed the surgery!

This was such a relief for the parents. After this kind of surgery the children become upset because they can’t move for a while and lose their confidence as the muscles are not used and become weak. Now, 1 of these 2 kids has perfect hips and the second kid has improvements of a few millimeters: that means the femurs are closer to the sockets than they were 6 months ago!

This kind of research project is very useful



We can see that in a few Bowen sessions the majority of children improved the memory, focusing ability, emotional state and behavior. The balance and coordination were other parameters that were observed and we can see that a good number of children had improvements.

“The results this therapy has had for my son has been amazing. The future now looks fantastic.” - Parent.

It was a rewarding project that surprised me a lot, and I want to encourage parents to try Bowen therapy. It’s not only the physical aspect that may improve, but also their emotional side: children become happier,

to publish on the internet because Bowen is relatively new on market compared with other therapies that are maybe 2,000 years old. More and more people research the internet these days in order to decide which complementary therapies they should try for their children. Finding research studies like this, helps them to collate facts and data.

If you have other research ideas please get in touch with BAUK. We can provide practical advice, edit press releases about your project and so on.

Camelia Pop