

FEELGOOD FACTOR

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Charlotte Ross has tried most therapies. But one little-known treatment has left her intrigued and going back for more

THE GRINBERG METHOD

WHAT IS IT: Grinberg is a holistic therapy based on "reading" the feet to discover underlying problems in the body. It sounds a bit wacky, but the treatment actually takes the form of gentle manipulation, breathing exercises and talking. Victoria Oldham is the only practitioner in the UK but she is training new therapists.

WHAT DOES IT CLAIM? To release long-held tension and correct physical imbalances in order to return you to a more childlike, effortless state of being. The method promises as many spiritual benefits as physical ones. Breaking unconscious physical habits can lead to a freer existence.

ANY SCIENCE TO IT? The Grinberg Method was developed by Avi Grinberg, originally a reflexologist, who believes that because we spend most of our day on our feet, it follows that problems in the way our body functions will be reflected

there. By addressing these issues the theory is the body will heal itself.

THE TREATMENT: Victoria began by examining my bare feet. The most obvious thing she "saw" was a curved, constricted area around my upper chest, which was affecting my breathing. The shape, which she outlined with a finger, echoed precisely the sideways spinal curvature (scoliosis) I've had since childhood, which causes constant pain.

She also diagnosed a reluctance to speak my mind — evidenced, oddly, by small build-ups of hard skin on my big toes — and abdominal or digestive discomfort. It was all spot on.

We discussed what situations could have elicited the emotional responses behind my back problems. Extreme shyness as a child and being uncomfortable with my height — I've been 5ft 9in since I was 11 — could have led to me trying to "shrink" into my body creating muscle tension and spinal curvature.

The same process was responsible for my reluctance to fully express

myself. Learning to break the connection between emotional and physical responses would be the first step in my healing process.

Victoria used her hands to locate sources of physical tension in my body. She then talked me through how to recognise the feeling associated with it and how to "breathe" it out. She went on to work on my back around the upper spine. Within a few minutes she had totally dissolved the pain I normally feel with every breath, leaving me feeling remarkably liberated.

Because Victoria talks through your physical issues and the emotions which may be underpinning them, Grinberg feels like a cross between therapy and a kind of massage. She believes we can build confidence by removing physical and emotional blocks. It's quite an intense process.

Two days later I went back for another session during which she worked quite deeply on tight muscles around my spine and continued teaching me how to release the tension I've been holding in my body. I've just had another two sessions



Insight to the sole: Victoria Oldham examines mind, body and feet

which left my body feeling completely renewed.

I'm intrigued. I'm holding myself more naturally and I notice whenever physical tension begins to set in. And I feel more spiritually centred, too.

The Grinberg Method has given me new awareness about my body and its problems, and some welcome relief from chronic pain. It's such an unusual therapy that it takes you by surprise a little. But when, like me,

you've tried every back treatment going, and developed a lot of scepticism, that's no bad thing.

WHERE: £60 for a one-hour treatment at Triyoga. It is recommended you do a course, with two sessions close together each month. Victoria Oldham visits London for several days each month. Email her at Victoria@mouettes.ch or contact her at Triyoga (020 7483 3344, www.triyoga.co.uk).

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More teeth trouble? Amy Winehouse

Chewing over drug damage

AMY WINEHOUSE may be horrified to discover her teeth are falling out at the tender age of 24, but I doubt any dentist is surprised. People who abuse drugs, particularly heroin, often have advanced tooth decay, gum disease and loose teeth (Amy is reported to have pulled one of her teeth out with her fingers).

A wide range of drugs, from alcohol to heroin, impair the immune system, increasing susceptibility to infection of the gums (gingivitis) — a common cause of bad breath and loose teeth. A problem compounded by the fact that many drug users also smoke heavily, another risk factor for gingivitis.

Add in self-neglect — few floss, brush their teeth regularly or visit their dentist for check-ups and a scale and polish — along with cravings for sweet things (associated with heroin use) and a propensity to tooth grinding at night (a problem in cocaine abusers) and it is easy to see why most long-term abusers have terrible teeth.

Give your children sophisticated taste

DR MARK PORTER'S MEDICAL NOTES

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SHOULD you have a fussy eater for a child — and which family hasn't got at least one? — you will be interested in some new research. It suggests that a baby's natural dislike for bitter foods such as broccoli and Brussels sprouts can be blunted if the mother eats them during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

New research from the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia suggests that young babies are more likely to take to foods that they have previously been exposed to in the womb, or through the

traces that make it into breast milk.

And these aren't the only windows of opportunity for new mothers. Babies are also thought to be particularly susceptible to new tastes and textures during the weaning process between the ages of six and nine months.

So rather than mixing their meals into amorphous homogenised glop, you should be keeping the ingredients separate so your child can log each individual taste.

And don't forget to pull the right face when feeding them. Babies are very good at picking up on subtle cues and if you wrinkle your nose when offering them a piece of fish, they will do the same.

A new bust isn't just for Christmas

IF YOU are considering treating yourself, or your partner, to a new bust for Christmas — as many people evidently do — then please bear in mind that you are entering a long-term commitment. Implants, like puppies (if you will excuse the pun), aren't just for Christmas.

While changed breasts can transform a woman's image and self-confidence, all implants eventually develop problems that require further surgery. If you are unlucky this can be painful hardening within a year or two of the first operation (one patient of mine has had three sets of implants in as many years), but

even if everything goes smoothly and it lasts 10 years or more, further surgery will be required.

The implant may not age, but the surrounding bust will, and what looks good in a 30-year-old rarely looks right in a woman in her fifties.

All breast augmentation carried out on women in their twenties or thirties will need at least one revision of the size and shape of the implants, or tightening of the surrounding breast tissue. And often many more.

Visit www.mybreast.org for a list of experienced cosmetic breast surgeons throughout the UK.