

Well Mother Newsletter

February 2007, Number 9



Letter from Suzanne

Welcome to the annual newsletter. I hope you all had a wonderful 2006 and are ready for the successes and challenges of 2007.

Email updates have continued to grow in strength. Do remember to keep your contacts updated, and if you don't have a reply from me, resend info as I get so many spam; one day I had 1,000 in my in-box!

The **Web-based Discussion Group** has given a lot of support to people during the year and I have written out one of the discussions. If you haven't already joined, and you have attended one of my courses, please do. It is a great learning and support resource - log onto: www.wellmother.org/messageboard

Last year saw a couple of successful new courses take place: the **Massage for Labour Support** course and the **Residential** in Stroud. The Residential will be repeated every two years (cf feedback). There was a richness from everyone sharing different angles and work approaches, be they midwives, shiatsu practitioners or massage therapists.

The two new **CPD courses** went well. The Kings College course was fascinating but I was slightly disappointed by the turn out. We wondered if some of you were put off by the idea of being in a dissection lab? I know my 16-year-old daughter was pretty disgusted when she knew where I had been! As it was an expensive course to run due to the facilities, I have decided not to repeat it this year but instead just keep you in touch with Caroline at the College of the Body Science. It was a great course and I would highly recommend it. I think all therapists should spend some time in a dissection lab. It certainly brought the uterus to life for me! For more info on "College of Body Science" visit www.collegeofbodyscience.com.

The **teacher-training** course has been very successful. I ran two 4-day workshops in January and November and some of the teachers are beginning to take over small teaching slots within the courses. They also help me out on larger courses. I am hoping that by 2008 they will be doing some more of the teaching and helping develop the work. Some of them have contributed to the newsletter. Lizzie Ruffell drew a wonderful picture on the effects of massage in labour, Sally Ibbotson has written a review of a CPD day and Nicola Endicott has written about running supervised practice sessions.

If you want to organise introductory courses or half-day revisions or supervision in your area contact me, and I may be able to arrange for a teacher to organise something local to you. This will be especially relevant for **midwives**. If you look on the website you will be able to see more information about the teachers.

I'm carrying on updating the manuals and course notes, and continuing to work on developing better written material for the courses and updating information on the website.

I hope to see many of you during this year, and hope you continue to enjoy your work and feel as inspired about it as I do.

Suzanne



Course information

There is more information on all of these courses on the website.

Introductory Courses for Midwives

My new aim is to come to you more, so please get in touch and I can arrange more courses in your area with my trainee teachers.

Difference between Intro Day and 4 day Massage Course

Some people have been asking about this and I have decided to write it up on my website.

Essentially the four-day course is the qualification for those who want to specialise in pregnancy work. The one day course is aimed at therapists who are not sure how much they eventually want to specialise in pregnancy work, but who would like to feel confident working with a client who becomes pregnant.

Massage for Labour Support

I ran this for the first time this year and it was successful. I currently aim to run it once a year, but once the teachers start doing more work, then it may well be offered more frequently.

We are still liaising with Doula UK re accrediting this course and the shiatsu practitioners module.

Shiatsu for Massage Therapists

I run a two-day course in Bristol, which is aimed at massage therapist who wants to introduce some shiatsu idea and techniques into their work. I will also be doing a workshop on this at the APNT conference 15th April 07.

CPD Events

Residential Gathering (open to all who have done a Well Mother course).

This was very successful and my aim is to run this every two years, probably in June. The next 4 day Residential Gathering will be 16th-19th June 08 in the Cotswolds.

Thoughts on the Residential Gathering June 2006

"Having just returned from Suzanne's Well Mother residential gathering/ retreat at Hawkwood College I feel refreshed, fully revived and enthusiastic about the content of the week.

There's something rather nice about studying whilst in a beautiful old-fashioned stately home. Outside gentle rolling countryside, abundant woodland, natural running underground stream (drawing our attention to the pull of water/kidney energy) and being there on the longest day/summer solstice to appreciate the abundance of life force and light.

Maybe I'd anticipated long lazy days of relaxation with random dips into ideas, stories, swapping treatments reading and discussion... This certainly was the main theme-however the actuality was an enthusiastic and intense meeting of minds, willing and eager to explore and share experiences plus to learn and add depth to our current understanding of pregnancy work to date. The course/retreat was open to varied styles of working during pregnancy from midwives, to reflexology, massage and shiatsu practitioners.

Time was spent in a steady flow of unhurried, thorough inquiry and learning; a ripe opportunity for discussion around the application of the techniques taught on the different Well Mother courses held by Suzanne and for sharing ideas.

Pauses for meditation added a personalised depth to one's own connection to the extraordinary vessels, how the changes during different stages of pregnancy relate to them and how the uterus functions in not just the physical but also deeply emotional ways. This provoked a thoughtful response, which increased and opened awareness to the staggering depth of ancestral links.

The environment and collective support provided a safe space for many of us to explore deep layers of the self and to perhaps unlock doors to unsolved personal mysteries. No doubt each practitioner approached and experienced these exercises very differently.

The course was open to male practitioners and thus broadened the scope of discussion fantastically. Bill's presentation on athletes adapting their training schedule through out pregnancy was great. In fact each individual helped create the workshop offering their own unique contribution – all participants were gratefully supported, inspired and educated by Suzanne's tireless and energetic approach.

Coming to retreat offers an unhurried chance to reflect on past modules and reorganise thoughts around subjects perhaps still very new to some. An open space is provided allowing one to be free from potentially limiting ideas and patterns plus the atmosphere of multi-gifted practitioners coming together created a unique blend of energies that could support sometimes deep/ subtle realisations.

As the retreat fell on the Summer Solstice we all celebrated with a ritual offering of our thanks and blessings at the well opening of the natural spring – a time where we let go of old excess, sang songs of renewal and had a laugh around a huge fire as the sun set.

By the end of our time at Hawkwood I think we all felt brilliantly renewed and warmly connected. I am glad to have made new friends and acquaintances during such a stimulating and enriching time spent with like-minded folk. I mustn't forget to mention that Hawkwood really did an amazing job providing us with endless nourishing home cooked and grown food regularly throughout each day.

There were no complaints – a great time was had!"

Christine Pike, shiatsu practitioner

"I think the best thing for me was time away, time to re-charge batteries so the wonderful venue, catering, meditations, Qi Gong, summer solstice ritual and the shiatsu I received are the main things I came away with!

Having said that I did find all the material we covered very helpful: some was revision, some going into more depth or adding new possibilities in and some different angles such as the reflexology: overall I thought it worked

well having a mix of therapists there.

I enjoyed the video and thought the point it was making about memory/emotional connections was very helpful.

Janet Atwood, Midwife and shiatsu practitioner

N.B. The video was by Elena Tonetti, "Birth as we know it". Essentially it is about the experience of water birth in Russia. It includes some amazing scenes of women giving birth in clear pools in Moscow and in the Black Sea in the summer. For more information go to www.birthintobeing.com

The Chiropractic Approach to Pregnancy

A day with Nina Hollingsworth who works as a Chiropractor at Bristol's Vital Health Clinic and specialises in the Chiropractic care of Pregnant Women. She teaches how to deepen your knowledge of soft tissue techniques and understand how chiropractors view pregnancy. This will be repeated on 12 July 07.

Friday 16th June 06, Bristol

"As a useful background to the day, following a brief introduction to the history and philosophy of Chiropractic, Nina outlined the training and continuing professional development requirements now placed upon Chiropractors. She also gave us information about what to expect from an appointment – apart from 'hands on' assessment and treatment, the Chiropractor might include X-rays, an MRS scan, dry needle work, nutritional advice or laboratory reports in her/his practice.

In terms of treating pregnant women, Nina is one of a number of Chiropractors practicing "Sacro- occipital Technique" – a way of feeling where the bones are and using gentle pressure and stretching to encourage balance and alignment. Because there is no force used – and none of the 'clicking back into place' that one might expect - this is a far more appropriate during pregnancy.

In addition, emphasis is placed on Optimal Foetal Positioning (OFP) – to have the baby lying 'Left occipital anterior' is to be encouraged. This will mean less stress for the baby, more comfort for the Mother, a faster labour and quicker recovery time. OFP is

mainly achieved by adjusting and aligning the Mothers body and also advising on positions to adopt (sitting with knees lower than hips for example) and exercise. All this so that the baby will naturally take up the position that is best for him/her.

Practical work took up about 70% of the day and participants were shown numerous assessment and pain relieving techniques...with plenty of time and support whilst practicing on one another.

In the main we were taken through the muscles and ligament that were likely to be stressed. We discussed presenting symptoms, likely repercussions, assessment techniques and realignment and, again this was all backed up by demonstrations and practical sessions.

Case studies were presented towards the end of the day so that we could recap on what we had learnt and apply it to 'live' situations.

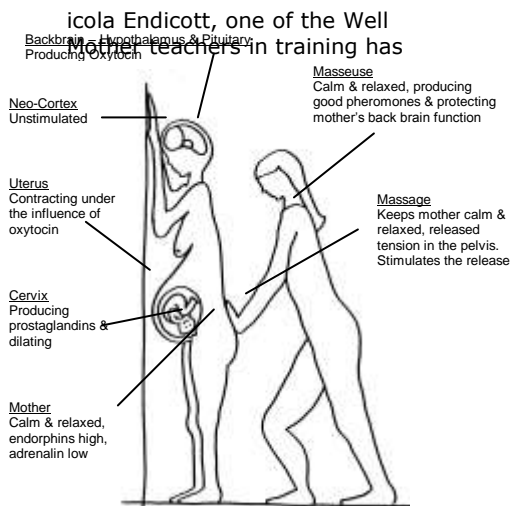
Finally, Nina had invited a pregnant client to receive a chiropractic treatment whilst we observed. This gave a clear idea of the pace, gentle nature and effectiveness of the techniques that we had learnt.

This was an interesting and highly useful day with a truly inspiring teacher – Highly recommended!!”
Sally Ibbotson, trainee teacher

Benefits of Massage in Labour

Picture drawn by Lizzie Ruffell, trainee teacher
(Picture should be here.)

Supervised practice sessions



been running some 'supervised practice sessions' for Shiatsu practitioners in London at the Kailash centre. Their aim has been to support shiatsu practitioners in revising, clarifying and practising material covered in the Well Mother Shiatsu modules.

The feedback from Shiatsu practitioners attending has been very positive: they have enjoyed having more time to go over material they did not fully understand, to practise new meridians with help to locate them and understand their purpose, to have a space to ask questions and ask advice about clients they are seeing. Following the session, they have expressed their greater confidence to go out and practise what they have learnt on Well Mother courses.

Web Based Discussion Group

This is from a thread on the Discussion Group:

A discussion on DVT – Jo Lloyd Pregnancy massage therapist

I had a phone call from a lady today 40+3 weeks, 2nd baby. She went over by 10 days on her first pregnancy and is worried about being induced this time. All seemed fine until I double-checked for any medical issues. She had a DVT 15 years ago as a result of a sporting injury; everything was resolved at the time and has had no issues since. She took aspirin during her first pregnancy. They did some tests and found her to have a hereditary condition that made her more susceptible to clotting. This pregnancy she has been taking klexian, is fit and well and has had no particular issues through her pregnancy.

I have spoken to one of the midwives at the birthing centre (her midwife is on holiday) and she was not happy to comment. The lady is going to the maternity hospital and is going to seek advice there. If we have no joy there we will make contact with either her GP or specialist. My question is; what would you do??

All my basic training said not to touch DVT, however this was very much in the context of recent and I never had cause to challenge the condition if someone had it 15 years ago.

I am really torn, one bit of me thinks it's harsh to penalise her

for something that happened 15 years ago and say no, especially if she ends up being induced. However on the other hand it's not just her that could be at risk, it's also the baby!

Has anyone ever treated a client having suffered from DVT?

Suzanne's reply

" The main thing to check is that she doesn't have a current DVT - which it sounds like she doesn't and that they are working to prevent it...She is receiving what one would hope would be appropriate medical care to prevent it from happening. This means that she is "low risk", however you need to check what is the current situation re advice she has been given...sounds like however there was not a problem after her first pregnancy - the postnatal period can also be problematic...I presume she is exercising and walking around...I would think in this case that massage would be of benefit in helping to prevent a thrombosis from developing. Obviously do check the legs, there may be varicose veins in which case no pressure. I would possibly work a little more lightly with the legs, but otherwise it sounds like it would be fine...anyway if you are seeing her for induction, you can focus more on the points on the shoulder (GB21) and hand (LI4), also relaxation, upper body work, breathing etc. Hope this helps and do let us know what happens.

Jo's reply

Her obstetric consultant gave the OK in the end, which although there was no evidence of a current DVT, I was still nervous about treating her. It's very difficult to work with a condition that when you trained you were told to never ever touch.

Anyway, she came and saw me on the Friday evening, we spent a long time before I started talking about her previous pregnancy, the DVT, this pregnancy, her medication etc. We also discussed her feelings/fears around being induced (something which I have found to be very important when doing treatments like this).

The DVT was quite bad at the time, but was a result of a sporting injury and a misplaced tubigrip. She had no issues after and has not had since.

She had no issues during or after her first pregnancy and she was

receiving care throughout this pregnancy. The consultant seemed to be more concerned about her risk of bleeding after the birth, than he was about the chance of a clot before hand, when he agreed to her having the treatment.

The DVT had affected her left leg from the knee down and as a result she had circulation issues (the veins were a little swollen and had oedema) She also told me that generally that leg is more sensitive, so I kept all this in mind when I did the treatment. She wore surgical stockings and I let her keep them on and worked through them.

She responded well to the treatment, having tightening / aches in different places on her bump, depending on what point I was pressing.

She went home looking relaxed and I have since had a text from her to say that she had the baby on the next evening.

I am glad I stuck with her and did not run away at the thought of DVT. She came to me asking for help regarding the labour and I was able to make a difference for her. Which to me is what this is all about.

Quotes from clients and course participants
Quotes from clients on practical session: Shiatsu Practitioner Birth Preparation module October 06

This was feedback from some clients who came on this module, to learn some shiatsu for birth preparation.

"Dear Pat, thank you so much for sending us the photos, it's wonderful to look back on pregnancy, it feels like so long ago all ready."

The birth of Freya Grace was wonderful. We had her on 17th October and she was born at home after a twelve hour labour. The first half was spent in the pool, which was deliriously peaceful and gentle Towards the end, in a bid to get my waters to break and to reach full dilation - I had a little lip of cervix that wouldn't budge! We spent a lot more time out of the water, using the ball and drawing on the techniques we had learnt with you. The workshop we had with you proved so valuable, Oli felt much better prepared and was able to guide me and support me

beautifully, it eased any self-doubt he may have experienced otherwise, so equipped him to fulfil his potential as a birth partner. I think that the experience has really empowered him; it has certainly given me enormous faith in my body. What an amazing thing; my body, my dignity and my pride all perfectly intact and we get the joy of a beautiful baby girl too".



Many thanks to you all,
with love Carina, Oli and Freya

(Higher resolution colour pic in Newsletter section on website)

Quotes from pregnancy massage client

It is always nice to have feedback about how my former students are doing. This is feedback about a student who is working in Australia. The word is being spread far and wide!! One of my other students set up Body Freedom and I visited her when I was last in Melbourne
(www.Bodyfreedom.com.au)

"I recently had a pregnancy massage by one of your past students Sara who is now practising at the Body Freedom Urban Retreat in Melbourne. I had been very sick and in hospital for quite some time and my husband took me for a surprise massage with Sara on the weekend."

Every moment was like heaven and I couldn't thank Sara enough. We would have paid anything to feel like that after having been bed ridden for so long and having been so miserable with being pregnant. I never thought it could be so hard and although I am truly excited now because I had lost a lot of weight, had no energy and was simply exhausted all of the time."

I hadn't seen or heard of the futon style of massage before and I think that really helped in

relaxing me, as I didn't have to sit on a chair or lie on my stomach."

The work you have done with your students is truly amazing and I have been promoting it to anyone who will listen".

Student quotes; Massage and Pregnancy Diploma Course

Finally some quotes from a student who recently did one of my pregnancy massage courses.

"Surprisingly good! Suzanne you're a brilliant teacher."

The course met my expectations and more. Completely amazing amount of information to take away and practice, a good balance of theory and application and Suzanne is a mine of information who imparts her wealth of knowledge with enthusiasm. I found the demonstrations intriguing - your wealth of experience shines thorough. Your ability to pick up what's happening with someone's body straight away and on such a profound level and in such a short time to make a difference to that person's energy and being, enthralled me. Would love to have a treatment with you sometime."

Well Mother Mission Aim

To support the wisdom of parents and babies by promoting the use of bodywork, especially massage, shiatsu and exercise, as a core part of 21st century maternity care.

Objectives

1. Provide training in massage and shiatsu for holistic maternity care for midwives, shiatsu & massage therapists, childbirth educators, and other relevant health professionals.
2. Support the links between all of the above groups through newsletters, conferences and other forms of networking.
3. Carry out research & support research into the use of massage and shiatsu in maternity care.
4. Publish articles, leaflets and books on massage and shiatsu in maternity care.
5. Provide classes and individual support for women, their partners and their babies in the maternity period.

Contact

**24 Dunkerry Road
Windmill Hill
Bristol BS3 4LB
England
Tel: 0117 963 2306
Email: enquiries@wellmother.org
Website: www.wellmother.org**