

## **PATHWAYS' CARING and SHARING DAY - 16 YEAR CELEBRATION!**

*A path is only a path. . . Look at every path closely and deliberately. Try it as many times as you think necessary. Then ask yourself alone, one question . . . Does this path have a heart? If it does, the path is good; if it doesn't it is of no use.*

Carlos Casteneda

The sun shone inside as well as outside the room, when thirty-five reflexologists gathered at Mangreen, Norfolk, on Saturday 12 May, to take part in a Reflexology Caring and Sharing day.



**Back 2 rows, from left:** Jenni Grant, Margaret Sims, Teresa Watker, Jayne Lloyd, Ina Webb, Khadijah Abdurrahman, Sue Moore, Angela Sellens Drake, Kaye MacKinnon, Pat Round, Sean Cooper, Jean Richards, Suzanne Howlett, Brenda Seville, Emma Fairbank, Sarah Groves, Michelle Flack, Erica Patten, Ros Dixom, Angie Watkins, Sarah Hayns, Sue Gunton, Jolene Littlewood

**Front Row, kneeling, from left:** Jane Clark, Susan Hancock, Marie Long, Dominique Rudd, Mary Corcoran, Moira Rowe, Helaina Checketts, Sandra Smith (*apologies to those who had to leave before this photo was taken!*)

The day was organised as part of a celebration of sixteen years of professional and advanced training at *Pathways School of Reflexology* in Norwich.

The group included two students from *Pathways'* first training courses - Valerie Rosbotham and Sandra Smith - as well as two from the current courses - Margaret Sims and Sarah Hayns - and many in-between!

The aim of the day was to celebrate Reflexology and its place in our lives.

We began with Tai Chi energy exercises.

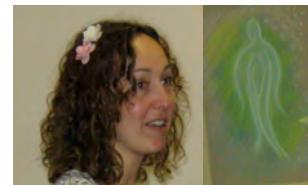
We then gathered into groups to share our experience of reflexology. A number of brave souls then offered to share part of their reflexology 'story' with the wider group!

Dominique Rudd talked of the intuitive connection she feels with the unborn child, when working with pregnant women.



Sarah Groves read a poem she'd written, about her reflexology 'journey'.

Marie Long is an intuitive artist, often using healing experiences as inspiration. She showed us some of her 'Spirit Art' and talked about the process of creating it.



Teresa Watker shared influences that have guided her on a spiritual, as well as therapeutic, journey.

Mary Corcoran talked about the striking visual indicators she found on the feet of a client with spinal injury.



Angie Watkins works as a British Sign Language 'signer' and gave us guidelines on what is – or isn't – helpful when working with people with hearing loss. She also showed us how Reflexology is 'signed'.

Jenni Grant talked about how her journey has led her to specialise in practising and teaching Maternity Reflexology and taking on the role of sharing Suzanne Enzer's inspirational work.



Our special guest for the day was Brenda Seville. Originally from Norfolk, she now lives and practices in Melbourne, Australia. Brenda talked about Reflexology in Australia. She also told us of the exciting work she's been doing, monitoring the effects of reflexology on women undergoing medical infertility treatment.



Before a healthy Mangreen lunch, Maddie Goolden shared circle dances with us, from different cultures. This involved lovely music, a lot of wrong moves and a great deal of laughter! A great way to end the morning!

In the afternoon we shared mini-treatments, using light touch 'balances' and colour visualisations.

We then chose either to swim – in the indoor pool – or join a meditation session in the 'Light Centre' - led by Naomi Duffield, who runs the spiritual education programme at Mangreen.



This was followed by tea and celebration cakes - showing a pair of feet decorated in chakra zone colours!

Angela then read messages from people who were not able to come and we remembered those who have moved away, in their journeys, and those who have moved on - with a very special mention of

Denis Fitt and Jules Slaughter.

Angela shared some of her memories from sixteen years of teaching and explained how the professional training is changing. She said that she now hopes to devote more time to developing her advanced workshops and training.



Finally, she talked about a research project she is setting up, using reflexology for young people with learning difficulties.

The day also featured a display of reflexology 'artefacts' and a second-hand reflexology and health book sale. This, along with a Raffle, helped to raise money for three local charities: St Martin's Housing Trust, Hillside Animal Sanctuary and Quiddenham Children's Hospice.

We ended on a 'high', singing and moving to the beautiful 'I am that I am' action prayer, shared with us by Chris Stormer during her many visits to Norfolk.

*It was a very special day, where everyone entered into the spirit of caring, sharing and celebration. Thank you to everyone for being part of my journey - it's been an amazing adventure! - Angela*

## Some messages received before and after the event ....

I would just like to say that for me reflexology has been a very important part of my journey.. it remains one of my favourite therapies to use with people, and I find the level of relaxation that they reach constantly surprises those for whom it is their first experience of reflexology.

Having studied clinical reflexology recently with teachers who believe that the touch has to be very firm to be effective, I have the benefit of having learned light touch first and know that both are effective.

Using therapies including reflexology at Pricilla Bacon Lodge (PBL) is very rewarding. For some people a treatment will be the thing they look forward to most, as it is enjoyable, helps them to feel better and can take them to another place for a while. Using it with this client group can be challenging, sad when you have got to know someone over many months and they then die, and lovely when you see people who are so pleased to see you coming because they are looking forward to their treatment.

Having a nursing background but with a longer love of complementary therapy, it had been my dream for some time to be able to work in the NHS providing complementary therapy. Certainly in the setting of PBL it is seen as an important element of the multi-disciplinary approach to care. I feel very lucky to be part of this and look forward to the future as this becomes more accepted by the medical profession. With very best wishes to you for a lovely day

Jane Sheehan (Co-ordinator for Complementary Therapies, Pricilla Bacon Centre for Specialist Palliative Care Services)

I've never practiced as a reflexologist, always intending my training to be a skill to use to help my family and myself.

Twelve years on, I still use reflexology - to help with my husband's migraine, to stop the pain of gall-stones when they wake me in the night, to soothe a tired child.

Reflexology is always there at my finger-tips, waiting to be used.

Kate Jackson Bedford

My marathon running has been an indirect result of reflexology. Coupled with my introduction to the Alexander Technique I have been able to complete 7 marathons in the last 5 years.

Gary Ambrose

Thank you for organising yesterday at Mangreen, I did so enjoy the day. I'm sorry I had to leave early...

While I feel my journey with reflexology has moved into the slow lane .. it has been a much loved and enjoyed 16 years.

Valerie Rosbotham

Thank you for a lovely day on Saturday ... and for all your patient teaching and support

Ina Webb

I have to say I would love to be able to spend every Saturday doing what we did on your special day.

It was so relaxing, enlightening and enjoyable and was great to catch up with friends I've not seen for a while. I felt so chilled when I got home, not even 3 unruly children could spoil it! ..... It was no co-incidence that several of us spoke of 'spiritual/intuitive' energy work and your practical was just that. We are all connected and our oneness was very apparent on the day.

Teresa Watker

I am so pleased that I managed to come to the celebration even if it was just for the morning. Thank you for organising the day.

Elisabeth Halls

Thank you so much for such a lovely day Saturday and I hope you enjoyed it as much as everyone else seemed to.

Margaret Sims

What a wonderful celebration. ...We all very much loved the day, I have been smiling since Saturday...even doing the weeding!

Mary Corcoran

Just a little note to say "Thank you" for a lovely day.

I really enjoyed meeting up with everyone again and listening to some of the wonderful accounts of those brave enough to tell their tale. You have helped some really amazing people on their journey to whatever and where ever they are going.

Sandra Smith

Thank you for an inspiring day on Saturday, as a new face in the group I felt warmly welcomed.

Suzanne Howlett

Thank you for what was a lovely day yesterday. I started thinking during the day not just my reasons for starting Reflexology but if it had changed my path as you mentioned it had to many of your students over the years ...

The thought of making a living out of reflexology was never and still is not my main goal from the course. It was more about myself being able to give a person a lovely relaxing treatment as I have received ....

As for my own pathway? I've found more and more that what I want is more peace of mind and contentment within the society we live in. Thanks again.

Sean Cooper

Firstly a very big thank you for arranging today and for keeping in touch with a very 'lapsed' student who is now back on track!

I thoroughly enjoyed today, the stories; the treatment was amazing as was the meditation and the dancing and singing. And as for the cakes.....brilliant!

Erica Patten