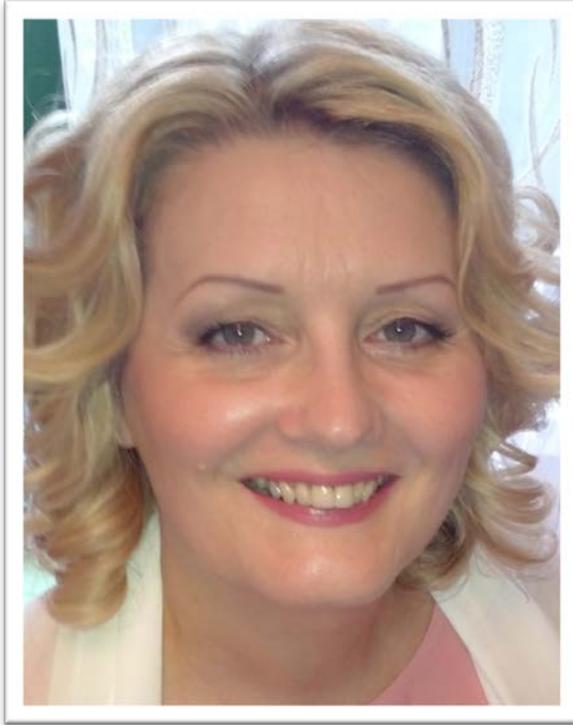


From maintaining healthy bank balances to maintaining a healthy bowel balance



I get asked by many people how I got started in the profession of colonic hydrotherapy. Well it's been a bit of a journey

I was born in 1960 and had a very happy childhood. There was never very much money, but I remember being warm, well fed, loved, secure and safe. All the things a child should feel when growing up.

I'm the eldest of three children and I was a tom-boy. I never wanted to play with the girls and dolls. I was always off with the lads, roaming the woods or the old abandoned allotments where we would make dens and fires. On non-School days, and the School holidays I would be gone for hours on end and only return home when I was hungry.

At the age of 16 I met Kevin, now my husband of 33 years, and at the age of 17, after leaving Secretarial College, I began working as an Office Junior in a Bank. There was no talk of me going to University. I was lucky enough to be allowed to go to College for a year, never mind 3 years at University. It was out of the question, simple as that. University wasn't even discussed. In my family you were expected to leave School one day, start work the following day and begin contributing financially. My Mum had to convince my Dad to allow me to go to Secretarial College for a year, where I gained qualifications in shorthand, typing, accounting, English and maths.

When I gained my Pitman shorthand, typing and City & Guilds qualifications, with Distinctions, from Secretarial College, I got a job at the local branch of a major Bank, as an Office Junior. I worked my way up the ranks from making the tea and coffee, to cashier work, then loans and overdrafts, mortgages, stocks and shares, foreign and legal work, and I LOVED IT!

I learned some very important, life-long lessons whilst working at the Bank, courtesy of my brilliant boss at the time, the branch Bank Manager, a Sheffield Wednesday mad Yorkshireman - Les Williams. He was blunt and didn't suffer fools. However, he was a very fair man, with a strong sense of justice. First and foremost he taught me the importance of customer service. To Les, the customer was 'King', and the poster in the staff room, with a picture of a lion on it, and the text, 'THE CUSTOMER IS KING' attested to that. If the phone rang, he expected it to be answered after two rings, and if more than two people were waiting in the queue to see one of the cashiers, another cashier had better get on that counter in double-quick time or woe-betide. It didn't matter if you had one pound or a million pounds in your Bank account, all customers were treated with the same respect and courtesy.

I loved working at the Bank, helping people with their finances and financial queries. Whether it was getting their foreign currency sorted out for their holiday (I would be as excited as them) or the more delicate job of helping them finalise their Will, I loved all aspects of my Banking career.

It was a very busy job and I did get some tension in my neck, shoulder and back muscles. I began attending a local health clinic for massage, aromatherapy, reflexology, acupuncture and osteopathic treatments, and these made me feel much better.

I worked at the Bank for 13 years, but decided to leave when, unfortunately the Bank was sold to a foreign Bank (it was previously British owned). I say unfortunately because it wasn't too long after that the new owners began to bring in more aggressive working practices - performance related pay, stressful targets that staff members had to hit or their salaries would be docked, or they would get bad Appraisals. I thought it was absolutely shocking, immoral and unethical that the Bank expected members of staff to 'sell' extra products to customers, when those customers may not want those products in the first place, and it was putting the customers under financial pressure. The Bank went from being a customer service focused Bank to a hard-nosed profit-driven monster. This was back in the late 1980's, and we all know what's happened since then don't we! It was never like that when the Bank was run by its British owners, and Les Williams was still our Manager.

I refused to work at the Bank under those kind of working practices and so I left. I'd always been interested in natural health. My paternal Grandad, Samuel Brooks, was a Master lay herbalist, and there was always something disgusting (or so I thought at the time) bubbling away in a pot on the top of the cooker. It was usually nettles or dot leaves. He would drink the water and make all manner of creams, ointments and tinctures. He had this big old iron saucepan and he would put it on some kind of griddle in front of the open coal fire and his goldenrod (a great herb for inflammation, skin problems and kidney problems) would be bubbling away too. My Grandad was shot in the throat at the Battle of the Somme in the First World War when he was 17, and they were never able to get all the shrapnel out. He always maintained that herbs, plants and flowers saved his life and enabled him to live a long life. He was a bit of a local character. He ran the local pub and they had bare knuckle fights there. It earned the nick-name locally of Brookies Blood Pub, for obvious reasons.

I decided to train as a Massage Therapist, opening up my own Clinic in Nottingham. I did further training in acupuncture, ultrasound, electro therapy and naturopathy. I soon became very busy, because I never forgot the importance of putting the customer first, and being a very good listener. I've also had excellent training in the different therapies I've studied. I've always believed that if a job is worth doing, then it's worth doing well. My husband and I even sold our house and used the equity to pay for more advanced training. I've spend a considerable amount of money on training over the years, and still do, but consider it money well spent and an investment. It was a strain at times because by then we had a young son. I've trained not just in the UK, but on the Continent as well. I still do lots of studying and research. I say to everyone that I'm a perpetual student and love studying and learning.

But, I hear you ask, "How did you get involved in colonic hydrotherapy?" Well, for as long as I could remember, I suffered with a 'lazy' bowel and constipation. It was the bane of my life, and despite having a healthy diet, drinking plenty of water and taking regular exercise, nothing seemed to

work. That's when someone recommended I see a well known Herbalist and Colonic Hydrotherapist in Oxford. Seeing her was one of those 'light-bulb' moments we sometimes get in life. The importance of having a healthy, well functioning bowel, not just for the health of the bowels, but for general health too, became crystal clear to me. That was it! I wanted to train in this therapy, and I did. I trained at The National College of Colonic Hydrotherapy, with Dr Milo Siewert as one of my tutors. Dr Siewert created a renaissance in colon hydrotherapy in the UK. He came over from Texas in the early 1980's and began training Nurses in London in the therapy. He took it from being a very marginalised therapy to one that became very popular, particularly amongst British royalty, film stars, celebrities, and just ordinary folk like you and I.

I love my job as a colonic hydrotherapist. It's my passion. Not my only passion in life, but it's a biggie. I get so much satisfaction from it. I know it's an old cliché, but it's true. The therapy is very gentle, yet can make a profound difference to the quality of life of a person suffering with functional bowel disease - Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Constipation, Bloating, Indigestion etc. People in pain get frightened. When even Doctors can't find the cause of the pain and discomfort, it makes them even more frightened. In the right, skilled hands, colonic hydrotherapy is so much more than just a bowel wash-out. It is very much a misunderstood, highly underestimated therapy. I've now carried out over 8,000 colonic treatments, and I'm still as passionate and driven about educating, and making aware of the benefits of modern colonic hydrotherapy, as I was when I first started. I like to think I'm quite a level-headed, calm person, but if someone 'offers' their opinion about colonic hydrotherapy, based on what they've read on t'internet, without actually speaking to people who've had the therapy, or at least trying it for themselves, then to quote a Northern saying "I don't gi a chuff!" If they really become quite rude and call me a 'crank', then watch out because it's not a pretty sight. I will defend the therapy of colon hydrotherapy, because I've personally experienced the benefits, and I've been privileged to be in a position to help thousands of people on the road to better health, through naturopathic colonic hydrotherapy.

I've gone from helping to maintain healthy bank balances for people, to helping maintain bowel balance, and ultimately better general health.

I have recently completed a new project that I've been working on for a couple of years now. I've developed my own range of natural digestive health supplements, aimed at treating the symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome, bloating, abdominal cramps, painful trapped gas, constipation, diarrhoea and indigestion. The range is called Just For Tummies by Linda Booth. I've also developed a special and delicious tea to help treat IBS as it contains herbs traditionally used to treat stomach cramps, gas and bowel spasm. It is called Tummy Tea. To find out more about my Just For Tummies range or read more about IBS, bloating, constipation etc, then visit Just For Tummies www.justfortummies.co.uk and sign up to the Newsletter at the bottom of the Tummies page so you are kept informed of blogs specifically aimed at people that have tummy troubles. Check out the Symptoms and Diet Plans on the navigation bar and understand why you get a constipated, bloated, gassy, painful tummy.

Linda Booth