

Helping children with health, behaviour and learning difficulties

By Dr Clive Lindley-Jones

One of the joys of living in a town like Oxford is that, as I did last night, I can cycle down the road and enjoy hearing lectures from the likes of John Stein Professor of Physiology, of Magdalene College.

As many will know, he has done a lot of exciting work on the brain and dyslexia. This lecture covered his fascinating research into the role of fast-acting magnocellular nerve cells found throughout the brain especially in the cerebellum, in a wide range of specific learning difficulties, through their influence on attention, reading, mood and conduct. He highlighted the importance of omega-3 fatty acids in the cell walls of these vital cells and therefore their importance in visual, auditory and kinaesthetic responses.

I was pleased to see that even at this specific level of university research the wider, multi-dimensional implications of learning difficulties were well understood.

The Sunflower Trust is a charity aimed at addressing these problems of neural disorganisation in a rather unique manner. The Sunflower Therapy comes

out of the work of osteopath Mark Mathews, himself affected by dyslexia, when he found that by putting many of the exciting clinical discoveries he was learning in his exploration of Osteopathy, Neuro Linguistic Programming and most specifically the diagnostic tool of Applied Kinesiology, he could have profound effects on many children who came to him with specific learning difficulties.

So exciting were his results that, after an initial encouraging pilot trial with Educational Psychologist Elizabeth Thomas in the early 1990s, the Sunflower Trust was formed in 1996 to promote, develop, and research this work and, through raising funds to provide bursaries, to make the tools that Mathews had blended together so creatively and effectively, more widely available. The therapy uses a combination of natural techniques to balance many aspects of physical, physiological and psychological problems in measurable ways that are matched individually to each child.

An important merit of the integrative approach of the Sunflower Therapy is its ability to address many aspects of structural, nutritional/biochemical and

psychological disturbances for children suffering specific learning difficulties like dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, and autistic spectrum disorders. The nervous system connects all these structural, biochemical and mental aspects together.

Tom's Story

For the first time since Tom started school four years ago I am not worried about his future, this is huge for me as a mother.

Tom started school with the teachers unable to understand him and no friends as he couldn't interact with other children despite having an older brother and younger sister. After a few weeks the school identified his problems as the result of Dyslexia and Dyspraxia.

A friend showed me the article in the Times about the Sunflower Trust and I now had to get Tom on the programme so I booked an appointment with Clive Lindley-Jones in Oxford. He said that he thought that he could help him. Tom started a programme which is a course of ten

different sessions which act like building blocks to create a happier child, from "bone crunching", as Tom called it, to cranial osteopathy and watch as Tom's body would go weak and floppy when holding a pen and paper and through Applied Kinesiology to strong and confident after the treatment holding the same pen and paper...

Tom has his own 'Mantra', which he calls his 'magic spell' which gives him strength, calmness, confidence and happiness and he says it to himself in times of need.

I can never thank Clive and the Sunflower Trust enough for giving me my son back. I took Tom and my other two children to an Art Gallery Workshop last week. We (children and adults) were invited to look around the gallery and then come back and share our thoughts. The exhibition was of paintings of different sizes of circles going around and around on each other. Tom's hand was the first to go up – in a loud confident voice Tom said "I think it is a young boy on his bike going round and round and the circles are the stories of his life". The whole room was amazed by an eight year old's perception of life.

So as Tom's story of his Sunflower journey and the fine work of Professor Stein both tell us, there are many foods for our brain. Getting them all working together can make all the difference to many more children in the future, if the Sunflower Trust can keep raising its funds.

The work of the Sunflower Trust shows the way forward for the importance of addressing all sides of this triad of health. We certainly need good nutrition to run our brains optimally, but we also need balanced reflexes, well functioning muscles and good coordination. If a child starts to have difficulties in learning very soon she/he may start to develop disempowering beliefs that, so easily, take over when an intelligent child just seems to find so much of school work an impenetrable jungle.

It is through its success at helping to unscramble many of just these aspects of neural disorganisation that has led the work of the Sunflower Trust to be studied and used by over one hundred osteopaths, medical doctors, chiropractors, psychologists and physiotherapists in both Britain and Germany over the last twelve years.



Clive Lindley-Jones B.Ed. (Hons) D.O. D.I.B.A.K. is a member of the General Osteopathic Council, A Diplomat of the International Board of Applied Kinesiology and a senior Trainer for the Sunflower Trust. Clive uses our clinical-grade product Vegepa as part of his treatment programme, also recommending VegeCO and MiniVegeCO where needed to top up vitamin and mineral micronutrients.

For more information about the Sunflower Trust visit www.sunflowertrust.com or phone 0845 054 7509. To book an appointment with Clive at Helix House Natural Health Centre in Oxford, call 01865 243351 or visit www.helixhouse.co.uk