

I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT MY...

If you were to list the most important people in your life, a complementary therapist might not come to mind – but three women swear theirs have changed their lives

WORDS SARAH GOODING PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW HAYES-WATKINS

...ACUPUNCTURIST

Julianne Miller, 43, first had acupuncture nine years ago to treat pre-menstrual symptoms. She works as a literacy tutor and lives in London with her husband and their two daughters, aged 10 and 12.

"I loved being pregnant for one extremely good reason – for the first time I didn't suffer from my usual terrible pre-menstrual symptoms. Before I became pregnant, my energy levels would drop exactly three days before every period, leaving me feeling totally wiped out and with such dreadful cramps I just wanted to curl up in a ball. But all that changed with pregnancy. I felt fantastic – it was as if I was flooded with feel-good hormones. I fell pregnant again a year later, so my hormone levels remained elevated. But once I'd finished breast-feeding, my periods returned and I felt worse than ever. That was nine years ago. So when a friend recommended that I try acupuncture, I thought

I'd give it a go. Needles had never bothered me, so what was there to lose?"

THE TREATMENT

After a 45-minute initial consultation with Gerad Kite, he suggested a link between a range of symptoms that I'd experienced throughout my life, which I'd thought were unrelated – such as dizzy spells, poor digestion and circulation. He then inserted needles along the top of my feet. The sensation was strange but not painful – I felt a slight sting as the needles were inserted and, as he gently turned the top of each one, there was a dull, dragging ache.

MY VERDICT

Just 24 hours later I felt totally reinvigorated and within days my whole body had responded to the treatment. My digestion improved dramatically; my skin glowed; I slept deeply and woke really refreshed – in fact, I felt incredibly well. That month, just a couple of weeks after my treatment, I had no moody PMT, no tense build up – and no cramping pain. After that, I saw Gerad about three times a year to keep everything in check. Then about five years ago, I noticed a shift in my cycle

"Just 24 hours after Gerad's initial treatment, I felt totally invigorated"


and new symptoms, including night sweats and unbelievable bleeding. My GP referred me to an endocrinologist, who prescribed progesterone hormone therapy, but this made me dreadfully sick. So I returned to Gerard, who recommended that I see him once a fortnight. After four sessions, my symptoms improved – and after six months I was back to my old self again. I now see Gerard every few months and have no doubt I'll visit him more as I near the menopause. Knowing Gerard is there for me makes me feel totally positive about the future.”

THE THERAPY

Classical Five-Element Acupuncture uses ultrafine needles inserted along the body's meridians (energy channels). This keeps your body, mind and spirit in a state of perfect balance. Acupuncture can treat back pain, arthritis, headaches, asthma, hay fever, anxiety, fatigue and digestive disorders and is even used in China as an anaesthetic during open-heart surgery.

THE ACUPUNCTURIST

Gerard Kite graduated as an acupuncture master from the College of Traditional Acupuncture and is a director of the Kite Clinic (kiteclinic.co.uk; 020 7408 0341).

“Julianne had a weakness in her ‘water element’, which relates to the kidneys and bladder. This means that her body's ability to hold and distribute reserves of energy and fluids was impaired. When your organs are not getting the fluids they need to do their job properly, all kinds of symptoms can occur – and the endocrine system, which governs hormones and periods, is often affected. I used acupuncture to restore the strength to Julianne's kidneys and bladder, which has solved her problem.” 

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