

# First Footing in Scotland

An article by Magda Werecka, a student at Body in Balance Training



I am a scientist working full time in a pharmaceutical company and now also a student of The Bayly School course in Reflexology run in Scotland. I come from Poland and arrived in Scotland in 2006. Reflexology has fascinated me since I was in my teens. I remember my auntie gave me a book on complementary and self-help therapies. Amongst them was a chapter about reflexology. I saw for the first time the charts with mapped reflexes on the feet and their correspondence to the body organs. This compelled me and I started to study the subject as my hobby, self-learning the techniques of applying pressure to particular points on the feet. I had a few volunteers from my family and I could see the first results of this pressure massage therapy. To my amazement it worked! Although I could not explain how it worked my family were happy to participate in my little experiments.

As the years passed by I finished my high school, went on to study Science, taught science and then moved to Scotland. To begin with I worked in a pub, enrolled for an English course and started looking for jobs in my profession. After a year I found employment in a Pharmaceutical company and have been working in that field to the present day. Reflexology was still with me and I would do self-treatments when having respiratory infections, headaches or when tired. It was an old friend I could always rely on. Last year while looking for something else I came across reflexology again. It was mentioned by a source I trust and The

Bayly school was quoted there. So it was purely accidental as I was not looking for reflexology courses at that time. Out of curiosity and feeling that maybe I was ready to take the subject more seriously, I did a little research and became convinced that it is a good school for reflexology courses. That's how my adventure at Body in Balance Training centre, which is the satellite school in Scotland, began.

I had a couple of meetings with Mariette and established that it is possible to pursue a Reflexology course while working full-time. Body in Balance seemed a perfect choice for me – small numbers of students (I'm the only one!), one-to-one tuition, ongoing skype updates and flexible schedule are just a few aspects. The main attraction for me is the fantastic way of teaching, the teacher's vast knowledge, a wide variety of topics and some great on-line resources. Studying Anatomy and Physiology(A&P) became a pleasure enhanced by the visual learning style, references to great websites, books and latest research on health and wellbeing issues. I thought I was already a good internet surfer but Mariette has taken that to whole new level.

I am now half way through my reflexology course and I have had to make adjustments in my daily routine. As I work full time I had to become much better organised in the evenings and sometimes say no to social outings. However sometimes I manage to combine both my social life and reflexology by making my friends subjects of my case studies. My weekends are now also dominated by studies – studying A&P is one thing but applying that knowledge in case studies is an ongoing process. It did take some time and discipline to accomplish the new routine and find the balance between my current work, studying and weekend trips to Body in Balance.

The fact that I am the only student is a huge advantage. Do you get this teacher-pupil ratio anywhere else? At each module we give each other treatment and this is the best way of learning the reflexology technique! For each module in Body in Balance I work on clients, whom I have never met before and receive useful feedback from them. This is ever so encouraging. I did have some success in my own case studies although it is still early and my main case studies are still

## First Footing in Scotland by Magda Werecka, continued



to come. One of my case studies involved a client who had suffered from an incomplete tear of a ligament in his shoulder, a year previously. He took physiotherapy sessions over several months however the pain was still present especially during night when turning in bed. He also reported cramps occurring daily in his both legs, with periods of severe spasm recurring once a week. The cramps had been present the whole of his adult life and although it was not preventing him from any activities they were an annoyance to him. He did confess that he did not really believe that Reflexology could help his conditions. On the first treatment he reported tenderness in his arm and shoulder reflexes and I did focus on them longer and more carefully. When examining him on the next session he reported to his amazement

that he had enjoyed some undisturbed nights when his injured arm did not trouble him at all. After the third session he reported that his cramps were less frequent and less severe. After a fourth session he said that there were days when he had no cramps at all, which was amazing to him considering that he had had them for such a long time, persisting every day. His arm troubled him less at nights which allowed him to go back to normal sleep patterns.

This case study gave me such confidence to build up my own massage skills in this pressure-touch based technique. I am also becoming more tuned in detecting the imbalances on feet and it gives me great encouragement when my diagnosis matches the client conditions. Although I still have lots to learn and have only carried out a few study cases, this initial success gives me faith that I had chosen a field I can succeed in. This optimism would not be possible without the continuous support and great training tools I am receiving from Body in Balance Training centre. I look forward to forthcoming modules and obtaining the Diploma of a fully qualified reflexology practitioner of The Bayly School course.