



REGAIN YOUR VITALITY

VICKY SARTAIN EXPERIENCES VIOLETTA COPE'S MANUAL LYMPH DRAINAGE TREATMENT IN TEIGNMOUTH
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN JACKSON



Not even a freak storm could ruffle my air of calm last month, when I found myself stuck on a train outside Teignmouth, mere feet away from swollen seas. As angry waves lashed the vulnerable carriages, I remained cushioned in a bubble of woody happiness. The journey down had been anything but relaxed, but after a soothing treatment from Violetta Cope, a fully certified Dr. Vodder practitioner of Manual Lymph Drainage, I felt as if I'd spent a week at a health farm!

The title of this treatment does not sound particularly glamorous, and I wasn't sure what to expect, but five minutes in Violetta's company was enough time to entrust her with anything - such is her enthusiasm for people.

The specialised massage (MLD) has many great benefits, relieving conditions such as lymphoedema, sinusitis, acne, rosacea, PMS, arthritis, and also IBS and constipation. It promotes healing, and is often employed in post-operative and trauma cases. It works by stimulating the body's lymphatic system to help it operate more efficiently.

Violetta works from home, and as we sat in her kitchen running through the preliminaries, I felt as if I had come to visit a friend, rather than conduct an interview. "Many people don't know very much about this treatment, so when they come for their first consultation I explain how it works and how it can help," Violetta explained.

While we chatted, Violetta showed me various physiology books containing diagrams of the body's lymphatic system and explained how the gentle massage technique helps invigorate a "stagnant" system, especially if there is a prolonged illness or immobility.

"The lymphatic system is the body's secondary circulation after the blood system. It removes excess fluids from the tissues as well as bacteria, viruses and waste products, which are broken down in the lymph nodes as part of the immune system," continued Violetta.

"When you are run down, especially during the winter months, you can often feel your glands swell up, particularly around your throat. This is a sign that the lymph nodes are working overtime to fight infection. In such a case, I will treat the client only when the infection has subsided, and focus on relieving any blockages in their system."



MLD is an unusual technique. As Violetta first demonstrated on my arm, the trick is to use zero pressure, after very slightly stretching the skin lengthways with the fingers, twisting and releasing. It is a very light sensation, even though it may not sound like it.

Violetta explained: "By repeating these movements, the lymph vessels just under the skin will be stimulated to contract more, breaking down any congestion, and thus improving the lymphatic system considerably for several hours." Imagine how great you'll feel after a few sessions!

With the body working to its optimum after a long period in a vegetative state, the side effects can induce drowsiness, which is why Violetta allows time for clients to come to and rehydrate.

"After a few sessions, the client will begin to regain their natural vitality. It's almost like getting used to exercise - it takes time to feel the benefits," Violetta continued. "A person will have different experiences from the treatment according to their general state of health."

The moment of truth was imminent. Being in good health, I was eager to discover whether I would detect any difference between this and a standard beauty treatment. Violetta had mentioned how great MLD is for anybody suffering with stress, or who finds it difficult to switch off, and I certainly found it easy to relax as Violetta worked initially on my neck, before moving on to my back and stomach.

After a short time I experienced a bizarre sensation of tingling across my back, which felt as if Violetta's hands were transmitting a light electrical current. Apparently, this is a sign that my sluggish lymph vessels were waking up. I, on the other hand, was ready for a snooze.

An hour and a half later, I re-awakened, greatly wishing I could stay put. To help me face the world, Violetta kindly made a round of fresh carrot juice while I applauded her talents once again. They say that beauty comes from within, and this internal work-out is more effective than any superficial quick fix. **DT**

Contact Violetta Cope on 01626 770121. Sessions last for 1.5 hours. Initial consultation including treatment: £45; thereafter individual treatments, £35.