

If you have got pale skin and bronzers look muddy instead of giving you a sun-kissed glow Life Matters muckup expert Charles Gilman has the summer look for you. Read his blog on the Life Matters pages online at www.eveningnews24.co.uk



I got my energy back

Walking through the city one Saturday morning, 44-year-old Louise Milner was enjoying a much needed shopping spree. It was something that she had been looking forward to for a long while.

Her enjoyable day was short lived. As she perused the clothes rails she suddenly felt extremely tired and weak. Thinking that she just needed to sit down and rest, Louise found a nearby cafe and tried to revive herself by having some lunch. But her symptoms got worse. Disappointed that she couldn't finish her shopping Louise headed home.

"The tiredness and weakness came on so suddenly it was quite a shock," says Louise. "The next day I had a sore throat, swollen glands and no energy whatsoever."

"I felt ill for two weeks and spent most of the day and night in bed." Louise visited her GP and was told that she was suffering from tonsillitis. However, her symptoms got worse.

Louise said: "When I expected to start feeling better and to be able to go back to work, I felt worse and developed more symptoms. I felt exhausted all the time. I had a sore throat, swollen glands, muscle pain and weakness, joint pain, headaches, high temperature, low temperature, poor concentration and short-term memory loss."

Louise felt like this for months. Sometimes she would feel tired as if she'd had a bad night's sleep, other times she was completely exhausted to such a degree that any physical or mental activity was impossible.

"My symptoms fluctuated in severity from hour to hour," says Louise. "Sometimes I had all the symptoms, other times only a few of them, but the fatigue was always there. My life suddenly changed completely. I had a part time job, working two days per week. Some days I didn't feel so ill, I struggled to work, but often had to leave after a few hours because I became too exhausted. I would go home and go straight to bed for the rest of the day and I would remain ill for the next few days."

"I eventually became too ill to work. It was difficult enough being at home, looking after the children and keeping up with household chores. Fortunately my children were of school age and so I had the opportunity to rest during the day, otherwise I don't know how I would have coped. My husband is an offshore worker and spends periods of time away from home."

Other aspects of Louise's life changed too. Organising social events such as shopping trips with friends became difficult as she never knew how she would feel on the day.

She said: "Some mornings I felt



Innovative therapy: Mickel therapist Gill Gough right, with patient Louise Milner. PHOTO: ANDY DARNELL

Gill's story

Gill suffered from ME for seven years before learning about Mickel Therapy. A course of treatment took her from having no energy and sleeping for large parts of the day back to her pre-ME days of being full of life and energy. Gill trained as an SRN and midwife and her nursing background helped with understanding how ME was affecting her body and causing her symptoms. She then chose to train as a therapist in order to help others overcome this debilitating illness.

→ To find out more contact Gill Gough at gill@mickeltherapy.com

Louise said: "The theory is that symptoms are the result of a malfunctioning hypothalamus. When it is not functioning normally, it signals to the pituitary gland to secrete stress hormones, which cause the various symptoms. This can be corrected by understanding the principles of Mickel Therapy and going through the steps, guided by the therapist."

"Having trained as a nurse, it made sense to me," says Louise.

"This was the first time I felt positive and excited about the real possibility of getting better."

Louise got in contact with local therapist Gill Gough. Gill had also suffered from ME but Mickel Therapy helped her recover.

Gill was so impressed by the results of the therapy that she decided to train as a therapist so that she could help others. She ran a therapy practice in Great Yarmouth and has recently set up clinic in Norwich at The Royal in Bank Place.

Prior to her therapy sessions Louise decided to stop taking all her medications and nutritional supplements so that she could find out if the therapy really worked.

Louise said: "Following my first appointment I felt far more positive than I had done in a long time. "Soon after starting this process the severity of my symptoms started to decrease and continued to do so in the following weeks."

"There was a direct correlation between the actions I took and the progress I made. It was amazing when I'd have for almost a year ceased completely. My sore throat and swollen glands lingered for some time, but within four months all my symptoms disappeared completely. This was incredible!"

Louise has been well for almost four years. During this time she has experienced mild symptoms, but thanks to Mickel Therapy she has been able to stop them becoming extreme.

Louise said: "My life is back to normal. I started a new job a few months after recovering, and I enjoy being able to socialise with family and friends again."

A shopping trip turned into a nightmare for Louise Milner from Norwich. She talks to **EMMA HARROWING** about the day she was diagnosed with ME and how a little known Scottish therapy gave her a new lease of life.

What is Mickel Therapy?

Dr David Mickel MBChB MRCPG qualified as a medical practitioner in 1992, going on to specialise in general practice in 1996, working full-time in a practice in Elgin, Scotland.

He developed an interest in CFS/ME and fibromyalgia during this time and, frustrated by attempts to treat the conditions, went on to develop the process of treatment now known as

Mickel Therapy. In 2002, following the success of this treatment, he resigned from his NHS position as general practitioner in order to commit fully to treating sufferers. He currently provides a private therapy service in Elgin treating CFS/ME and fibromyalgia and other 'energy disorders'. The therapy involves identifying and rectifying the cause of the symptoms

rather than working directly on the symptoms. It also requires the patient to take an active role in the therapy. The therapy does not resort to medication, dietary change, supplements or psychotherapy. Mickel Therapy can treat all types of energy disorders including CFA, post viral fatigue, ME, fibromyalgia, irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety, depression and migraines.

better than usual, so I would make plans to do something constructive with the day. This could be catching up with housework or shopping, or maybe meeting up with a friend.

"However, either the plans had to be changed because within a short time I would feel ill again."

Even activities such as reading a book become too exhausting and Louise found that sometimes she could only read for 15 minutes before she felt mentally exhausted.

Louise underwent a process of eliminating various illnesses at her doctor's surgery. After ruling out medical conditions such as glandular fever, she was finally diagnosed with myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME). "There is a lot of

misunderstanding about this illness, which makes it even more frustrating," says Louise. "As you don't appear to be ill people assume that you are just being lazy."

Like the majority of people who have been diagnosed with an illness Louise did some research. "Everything I read about ME gave me a negative prognosis," says Louise. "Conventionally there is no cure. Treatment consists of medications to control symptoms and learning to manage the illness by 'pacing', which means that every period of activity needs to be followed by a period of rest."

For ME sufferers periods of activity can be something as simple as making a drink or taking a shower, depending on the severity of the illness.

Louise said: "Even when experiencing what I call a 'good' day, I could not do much in the way of activity because it would need to be followed by a prolonged period of rest. The severity of my symptoms was getting worse every day. For me this was the most frightening thing and I became depressed, thinking that my chance of recovering was low."

Then Louise's life changed for the better. As she researched the illness on the internet, she read about how a therapy developed in Scotland was helping ME sufferers. Mickel Therapy was developed by Dr Mickel a former GP in Elgin, Scotland. The therapy involves identifying and rectifying the cause of the symptoms rather than working directly on the symptoms.