FRESHEN UP YOUR MENU FOR SPRING
Chives, Dandelion, Asparagus, and Peas

EASING INSOMNIA
Natural Help for a Good Night’s Sleep

THE HUMAN MICROBIOME
The Critical Role Played By Your Inner Terrain in Protecting Your Health
Every time it comes as a surprise: How much relief, how much transformation lies waiting in this tiny room tucked away on the top floor of an unassuming building at the corner of Yonge and St. Clair. And yet, without fail, the woman who descends the staircase appears to be a different creature from the one who made her way up it about 90 minutes earlier.

The fine lines etched by eyes squinting at a computer screen for long hours have faded; a healthy glow has returned to her cheeks. And maybe more important, it is how I feel as well – lighter, calmer, fresher. So what goes on behind closed doors at 1454 Yonge Street?

A Bellanina Facial Massage

Facial massage. A Bellanina Facelift Massage, to be precise. I know – the name sounds a bit fluffy, not really what I’d go for usually. The treatment is anything but, though, a little piece of heaven with real, visible effects back here on earth.

The technique (then called Belavi), which alternates between pampering hot towels and honey masks and vigorous taps and strokes of the face, was originally developed in the 1980s in California, as an alternative to more invasive methods of facial rejuvenation ranging from dermabrasion to surgery.

The idea was a holistic approach, one based on scientific knowledge of how the skin actually functions and ages. It was also based on a comparison: if exercise and massage help tone and firm muscles and tissue in the rest of the body, why shouldn’t the face benefit from a similar regimen?

Skin Basics

Let’s begin with some basics: The skin is a hard-working organ – the body’s largest, in fact – constantly breathing and attempting to regulate influences from both the inside (toxins from the food we eat, for example, or from stress hormones) and the outside (more toxins, an excess of sun exposure, and the like).

Its surface layer, a thin 10 percent, is called the epidermis, the area we usually treat to improve our appearance. Exfoliation, for example, helps remove dead cells from the top of the skin to keep us looking fresh and healthy. Yet underneath the epidermis lies the massive dermis, which contains our muscles, nerves, blood vessels, various glands, and hair follicles (I’m keeping it simple).

Here, too, in the dermis, resides a structural protein called collagen, the connective tissue responsible for the skin’s structure and form. It is collagen, as well elastin fibres in the tissue, that respond well to the palpations, pinches, and brushes of the massage practitioner’s hands during the Bellanina treatment.

Why?

In some way, you can think of it as taking your face to the gym, though, luckily, the muscular effort is the therapist’s. The repetitive massage draws on acupuncture points, lymphatic drainage strokes, and contouring techniques to stimulate energy points and the skin’s natural metabolic processes: blood circulates more vigorously, delivering oxygen and nutrients; capillaries strengthen; cells renew more quickly; interior hydration occurs. This not only makes the skin more vibrant, but actually tones and firms up facial musculature, so that the result in fact resembles a “lift.”

As with any exercise regimen we might follow, repetition is also king with
Bellanina. Reminding the muscle and tissue in your face of the proper way takes time and requires some maintenance, though results definitely show after a single treatment. And even if, as Sandra Fox, teacher of the technique and owner of the Healing Room tells me, someone opts for the fix of surgery, her brand of facial massage will assist in maintaining facial elasticity and healing afterward.

I walk up those stairs in the middle of what is otherwise a normal working day to lie down in a dim, silent room, and for an hour and 15 minutes I forget the world in a play of warm and cool on my face, surrounded by mild scents of honey, lavender, and chamomile. Sometimes I drift off. Sometimes I laugh – as when a spirited tug on my chin reminds me that, hey, I’m working out!

Health maintenance, beauty treatment, relaxation—Bellanina combines all three. The Healing Room’s motto says it all: Stress Mended. Yes, indeed.

Sandra Fox is the founder of The Healing Room in Toronto since 1996. She practises reflexology, manual lymphatic drainage and the Bellanina Face Lift Massage. She also offers Bellanina Facelift Massage Specialist seminars through the year. For an appointment or for more information you can reach her by phone at (416) 924-6579 or visit www.thehealingroomtoronto.com

---

BECOME A CERTIFIED LIFE COACH or EXECUTIVE COACH

Our 2 day intensive course will teach you everything you need to know to succeed. All Certified Coaches Federation graduates also receive admission (at no additional cost!) to our 1 year CCF Continuing Education Program!

Only Certified Coaches Federation™ graduates earn the esteemed Certified Life Coach Practitioner™ designation!

REGISTER TODAY:
Certified Life Coach Course in Toronto,
May 28-29, 2016 (Weekend)
Fairmont Royal York Hotel
(Downtown Toronto)

For further information please call: 866.455.2155
www.certifiedcoachesfederation.com