

Support for success

2013 FHT Tutor of the Year
Amanda Brooks discusses
health kinesiology and
what takes a tutor
from good to great



Q When did you become interested in kinesiology?

In 1990, when I was working as a chiropractor. It really bothered me that some patients were still in pain even though their skeletal systems were aligned. I started exploring Health Kinesiology (HK)* as a quick and simple way of addressing their imbalances, before taking a HK course where my first treatment literally changed my life. Not only did I feel better than I had in years, but I started using HK on patients who hadn't made good progress using chiropractic techniques alone. The results were incredible and I was so delighted that I set up my own practice and I have been committed to helping people through HK ever since.

Q When did you get involved in teaching?

I started teaching kinesiology in 1995 to trainee McTimoney/Corley chiropractors and the more I learned about this healing technique, the more enthusiastic I became about sharing it with others, so I then trained as a HK tutor and a Touch for Health tutor and assessor.

Q What changes have you seen over the 18 years you have been teaching kinesiology?

Originally people were mainly learning kinesiology so they could treat their family and friends; now students are more career focused and want to earn a living as a therapist. The complementary therapy industry has responded by becoming more regulated and established. More complementary therapists are also studying kinesiology to complement their original therapy.

Q You have taught in both the UK and Canada – how was it teaching in another country?

The UK and New Zealand have a strict structure for health kinesiology, so it was great to be able to introduce that in Canada and it was such a fantastic experience working there. The students were really enthusiastic and had a real thirst for knowledge; one Canadian student even travelled to the UK once I had returned here to continue her training with us – such a compliment. There were the expected language differences – I kept forgetting to use the word table instead of couch. But in reality, the underlying desire to learn is the same worldwide.

Q What do you think takes a tutor from good to great?

For me, it is all about the students – observing them, listening to them, being aware of their needs and tailoring the class to fit their individual styles. Knowing the material well allows a tutor the freedom to concentrate on each student's learning needs. It may sound

like hard work, but it becomes simple. I have been using this style for years and find my students really 'get' the material much more easily.

Q What does it take to develop a student into a successful therapist?

Support, especially in the early days; teaching them about professional boundaries with clients and looking after themselves while practising to help them maintain their own health and well-being, as these are key ingredients to a successful therapist.

Q Many of your students say your support continued long after their course ended, is this important?

Yes, it is so easy to think 'right, the students have qualified now, I have done my job', but for the student, being left to their own devices can be quite daunting. It takes time to develop a way of working that suits them as individuals, which is where continued support, such as always being available on the end of the telephone or email, or providing

mentoring, as and when needed, becomes invaluable.

Q Why is mentoring important for therapists starting out?

It can take three to four years for new therapists to become full-time practitioners with thriving practices; it's a really difficult time and it's so easy to feel like giving up. Mentoring gives the support, encouragement and goal setting to help new therapists move forward with confidence.

Q What is the best advice you have been given?

If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again. I know it is an old adage, but if you apply it then anything is achievable.

Q How do you take care of your own health and well-being?

It is so easy to concentrate on your clients and forget about your own needs, but I ensure I give myself regular HK and I swap sessions with other practitioners. I also spend my weekends with my son, ferrying him to football fields; watching the child you love playing and interacting is more nourishing than anything else in the world.

Q What are your plans?

I find HK exciting as each client needs something different, so I will continue to focus on helping my clients and growing my business. I dream of building relaxing, purpose-built treatment rooms in my back yard. I am also very close to my adorable teenage son, so I intend to enjoy mothering him as long as he will let me.

Q Do you have a favourite quote or saying?

'There isn't a person anywhere who isn't capable of doing more than he thinks he can.'
Henry Ford.

**Health Kinesiology uses a combination of muscle testing and Chinese acupuncture points to help free blockages in a client's energy system and bring the body back into harmony and balance. HK is gentle and suitable for a whole range of physical, physiological and psychological concerns.*

2013 FHT Excellence in Education Tutor of the Year, **Amanda** has 23 years experience in the kinesiology industry. She is a HK tutor and practitioner based in Bicester, Oxfordshire. www.thewillowtree.me