



BAAC Member
www.baac.ac.uk

British
Acupuncture
Council

Lucy Supp

Hello,

and welcome to the December issue of the newsletter. As most of you know, a few weeks ago I went to Hebron, Palestine for 2 weeks to set up a free acupuncture clinic for anyone who wanted treatment. Many of you donated money to this project, and without you, I wouldn't have been able to do it. It was a huge success, over 11 days I gave around 300 treatments and people responded incredibly well, with most people being 75-100% better by the time I left. After treating up to 6 people an hour, it has left me thinking about setting up a low-cost acupuncture clinic here in Oxford, so watch this space!

While I was away, I experienced a few problems with my phone which I am trying to sort out. I appear to have not received any of the voice or text messages that some of you had left me. I always respond to your messages within 24 hours, so if you leave me a message or send a text and don't hear back from me, please do get in touch again or send me an email. My apologies for the joys of my network's service!

Below you will find my account of the trip to Hebron, with some photos so that you can see what it's like. I'm guessing not many of you will go there on holiday, so I included some photos of the city, and the car that took me to the clinic every day. I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and new year – enjoy it.

My Transport



Two days before we leave for our charity acupuncture trip to Hebron, Peter does his back in and I realise that I am going by myself. Forty-eight hours later and I am sitting on the plane scared and excited. I am greeted in Hebron by four men who carry my bags, sort my room out, find me a heater (it's absolutely freezing and I cannot believe I didn't check the weather as I have almost no warm clothes) and warn me not to go out in the cold when I have wet hair! A lovely welcome.

The clinic is quite rough, it's usually used as a children's centre for kids to come and learn and play; there don't appear to be any playgrounds, kids don't seem to have toys, so this place is a refuge for very under privileged children. I have two rooms and a reception. People come in with all types of problems, but I see mostly muscular-skeletal conditions - knee pain, back pain etc. The women all wear headscarves and only show their faces, some are in burqas. I would say about 90% are overweight, most morbidly obese. It is a hard life, especially for the women who have to serve their husbands, although they accept this seemingly willingly, but I have my doubts as a very free Western woman! They cannot exercise, because who could in a burqa? They cook, clean, look after their 5, 6, 7 or 8 children and some of them work, but it appears that none of them have high flying jobs; this seems to be reserved for the men.

The situation here sucks. It is like a mini jail. They are fenced in with huge concrete walls, Israel on the other side, a shiny, new, developed country where people have good job prospects and the women are free. The men tell me that it is hard to find a good job; some of them are lucky enough to be able to work for their fathers in their businesses, but if not it can take months to find a suitable job, leaving many out of work. The situation here is confusing, Israel controls some parts of the city, where they have checkpoints that people have to go through on their way to do shopping or go to the mosque. Other parts are controlled by the Palestinians, but if the Israeli army decide they want to come in and look for someone, the Palestinian police have to leave the streets and turn their power over to the army. They are basically ruled by the Israelis, even though it's not always apparent.

One of the Clinic Rooms



People appear to live with anger and hatred towards the 'Jews'. They are a suppressed race, first by the British and now by the Israelis, their land taken away and their people shoved into small areas where they have no real control. The hatred runs so deep I am not sure I can believe in peace ever being made. The Jewish settlers, a group of crazy, hate filled people, come and steal the land from under the Palestinians feet, building communities in the heart of Palestine. Any Israeli person has a right to be protected by the army, so when they go and build houses on Palestinian land, the army is right there behind them, protecting them. For the Palestinians it is a hopeless battle. From what I know of living in Israel, most Israelis also hate the settlers and the war, and would just like peace. Who doesn't want to live a peaceful life not surrounded by people that hate each other? No-one wants this situation, well almost no-one.

Hebron itself is a concrete jungle, rubbish everywhere and poverty very apparent. I didn't realise how suppressed I felt until I came to Israel on my last day, a place that I could laugh, joke, wear short sleeves, be proud to be a woman, be proud to show off my figure and stand my ground and not just talk about whether or not I was going to get married and have babies. It made me realise how lucky we all are to be born in the Western world where we have freedom, rights and hope.

My days in clinic are long and hard, I treat anywhere from 30 - 50 people a day. In the beginning I worried that with me basically just throwing needles in as fast as I could that people wouldn't get better as quickly. I was amazed at the results we saw, apart from very chronic, complicated conditions, such as people who had strokes, or were in wheelchairs, almost everyone either got 75-100% better. I treated quite a few children who responded incredibly well to the acupuncture and none of them cried! The people here are amazing, we had such a laugh with my attempts at Arabic, everyone is so ready to talk, joke and laugh. It is a true community, everyone seems to know each other or be related and everyone helps each other out. I never felt alone.

The people who I work with do a fantastic job of keeping me amused. They teach me funny words in Arabic and play stupid pranks like giving me chicken for lunch one day - 'this is a healthy chicken'...it had toothpicks stuck all over it, '...it's had acupuncture!' I don't think I could have coped with the huge numbers of people I had to treat without their help, support and silliness. They kept me laughing and without them I couldn't have done it. I owe them an awful lot. I will also miss them, they became like brothers to me, joking around, being silly and just enjoying the moment.

Every night I go for dinner at someone's house. The invitations are endless, everyone wants to feed me and give me presents. I don't lift a finger. I always have my entourage of 3 or 4 men who run around after me, buying me water, food, carrying my bags and just making sure that I have everything I could possibly want. In a country where women are

suppressed, they also seem to be treated like princesses, which to be honest I quite like, although I wouldn't trade it for a second for my freedom and my rights to do what I want to do with my life.

On my last day, from money I was given by friends and family before I left, I bought a few bags of toys and we went to the poorest, most disadvantaged families and gave the kids these toys. I was so close to tears at the first visit that I asked them to visit the rest of the families when I had gone. These people lived in a 4 room house - 2 bedrooms, a lounge and a kitchen, with 8 children. Their house was completely bare apart from some really horrible furniture that didn't match and looked like it had come out of the tip. The kids were so happy to have toys, it made me so sad and so emotional; we made a quick exit before I was in floods of tears. We are so lucky to live the lives we lead and to be able to give our children the opportunities they deserve, even just the right to be children and live that carefree existence that most of us have had the privilege to experience.



Two Young Children with Throat and Ear Problems

To all the sponsors:

You all made it possible for me to come out here and treat so many people, making huge differences to their lives. We showed a group of very disadvantaged people that we care, that people in the world are aware that they are having a pretty hard time and that we want to do something for them. They were so grateful, so appreciative and I am sure that spreading a little bit of love in a place so full of hatred and war can only go towards them finding peace and happiness in a messed up world. I only wish that you could have seen the appreciation in their eyes; it brought me close to tears on many occasions. You have made this possible and you have made a difference to so many families in Hebron. Thank you. To anyone who would like to sponsor this kind of trip in the future, I will definitely be going back at some point next year or the year after.



Abed and Hitham always making me laugh and Making Tea



The Reception/Waiting Room



Hebron City Centre

07506 761 741
www.lucyjuppacupuncture.com
lucy@lucyjuppacupuncture.com

Lucy Supp

If you would like to unsubscribe to this newsletter,
please email UNSUBSCRIBE to: lucy@lucyjuppacupuncture.com