



# Sue Ricks Newsletter

## Gentle Inspirations

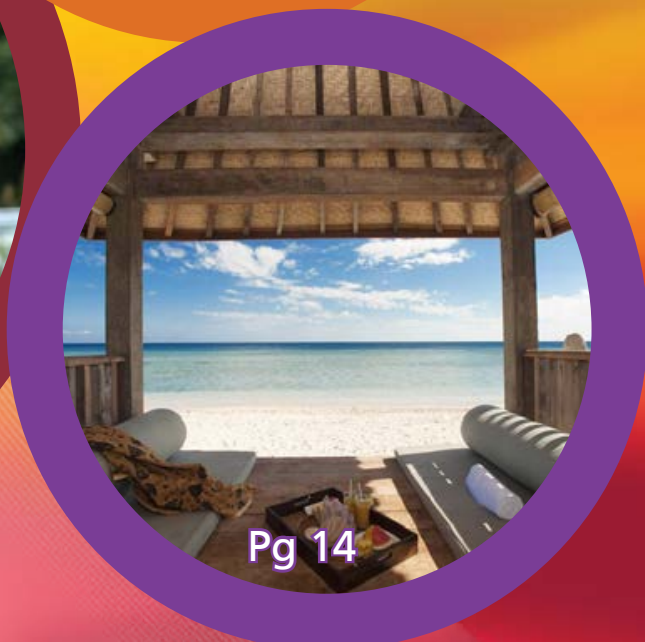
In this, our second edition, we have stories, recommendations and great tips for a better life.



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# Introduction

Welcome to our lovely Gentle Inspirations Newsletter.

We are so grateful for the lovely feedback about our first newsletter. It's been great to read such positive comments. Thank you!

We aim to provide further life affirming information and tips in this issue of our newsletter Gentle Inspirations.

In this edition you will find some honest and revealing information from Hannah Adams on what it's like to prepare for the birth of your baby and then everything changes with the birth of a premature teeny tiny tot. I was so touched by what she wrote at the time that I asked her to write and share what messages she has for us. What a beautiful little girl we see now.

I have a gardening tip and a website recommendation that I think you will love, plus our regular travel entry.

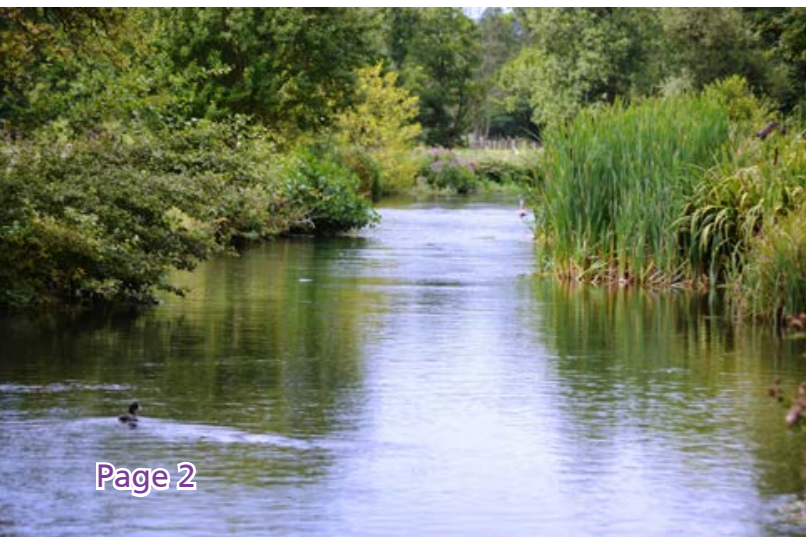
Recipe corner is one of my favourites that was regularly featured at my parent's dinner parties however, any time it's delicious!

We have included some Academy and Courses information plus details of this editions offer. The offer is valid until 30th September.

Plus, our uplifting images to brighten your day.

We invite you to stay in touch with us and tell us over email, Facebook, messenger etc how you are enjoying the newsletter. We welcome suggestions too. We thank you for being part of this newsletter by reading it... Enjoy!

Sue x x



## Update from Sue

Since our last newsletter we've had a lovely time in one of our favourite places in Derbyshire, you can read more about the joys of Derbyshire in this newsletter.

We've been busy getting everything ready for the first ever International Foot Reading Conference on September 20th. This is an amazing opportunity to meet up with five international Foot Readers and hear from them plus see and buy their books. The presenters are Sam Belyea, Mauricio (Moshe) Kruchik, Jane Sheehan, Christine Stormer Fryer and myself. This is a one off, one day experience that is set to be amazing. There are a few tickets left so act now to get one of the last remaining tickets.

[Buy Your Ticket now!](#)

I have really enjoyed doing some filming regarding working with babies and children and will be releasing that soon. I'm loving seeing and hearing about the amazing work that people are doing in helping youngsters via the use of reflexology. One comment this week was very moving "I never thought this would change my life as well as theirs!".

I am delighted to have approved the content and artwork for the second editions of two of my books, Gentle Touch Reflexology for Babies and Children and E-Motions, energy in motion – messages of the body. They are two very different books that sold out at the same time prompting the creation of the second editions of both books and I look forward to sharing them with you soon!

Back at home, our garden has been through one of the hottest summers and we are now getting back to grips with it. I've included information on how I keep weeds under control in this newsletter. I'm enjoying getting back into gardening again. I find it very relaxing and grounding.

I continue to be inspired by how my Dad deals with his condition and feel lucky to be able to visit him. Dementia and Alzheimer's is a tough thing to have and watch happening. I admire his bravery and acceptance. His most heard phrase these days is "I'll just have to accept it!". A true gentleman who still makes residents smile!

I've enjoyed playtime with my much loved grandchildren and heard shrieks and giggles during water fights, whilst dodging the drops!

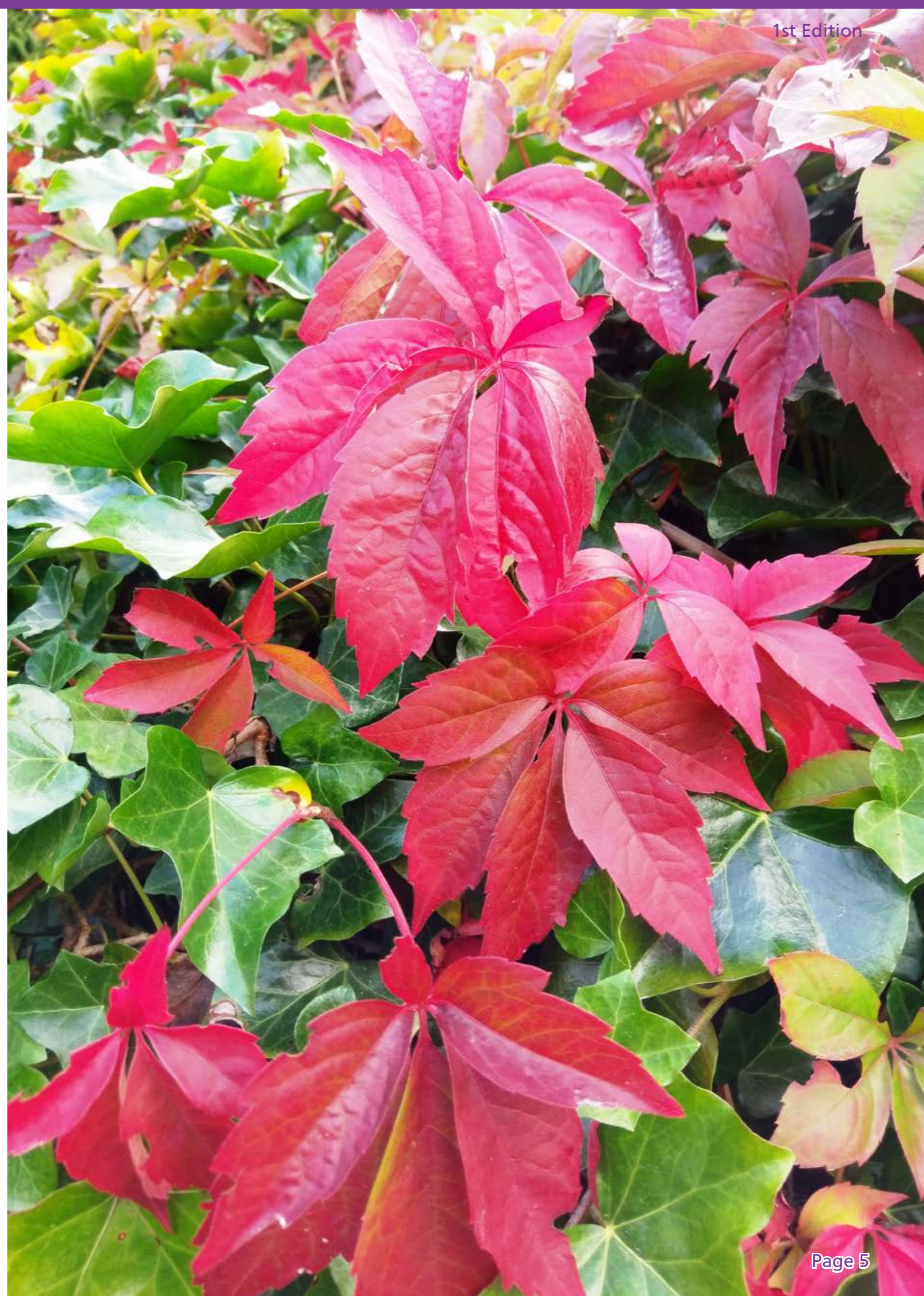
Love to all

Sue

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For more updates, like us on facebook and follow us on Instagram



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# Clinic News

Like so many other people it has been lovely to welcome so many new clients into my clinic. I remember when I first started in clinic how lucky I felt and superbly I still feel the same. It's an honour and a privilege to work with deepest levels.

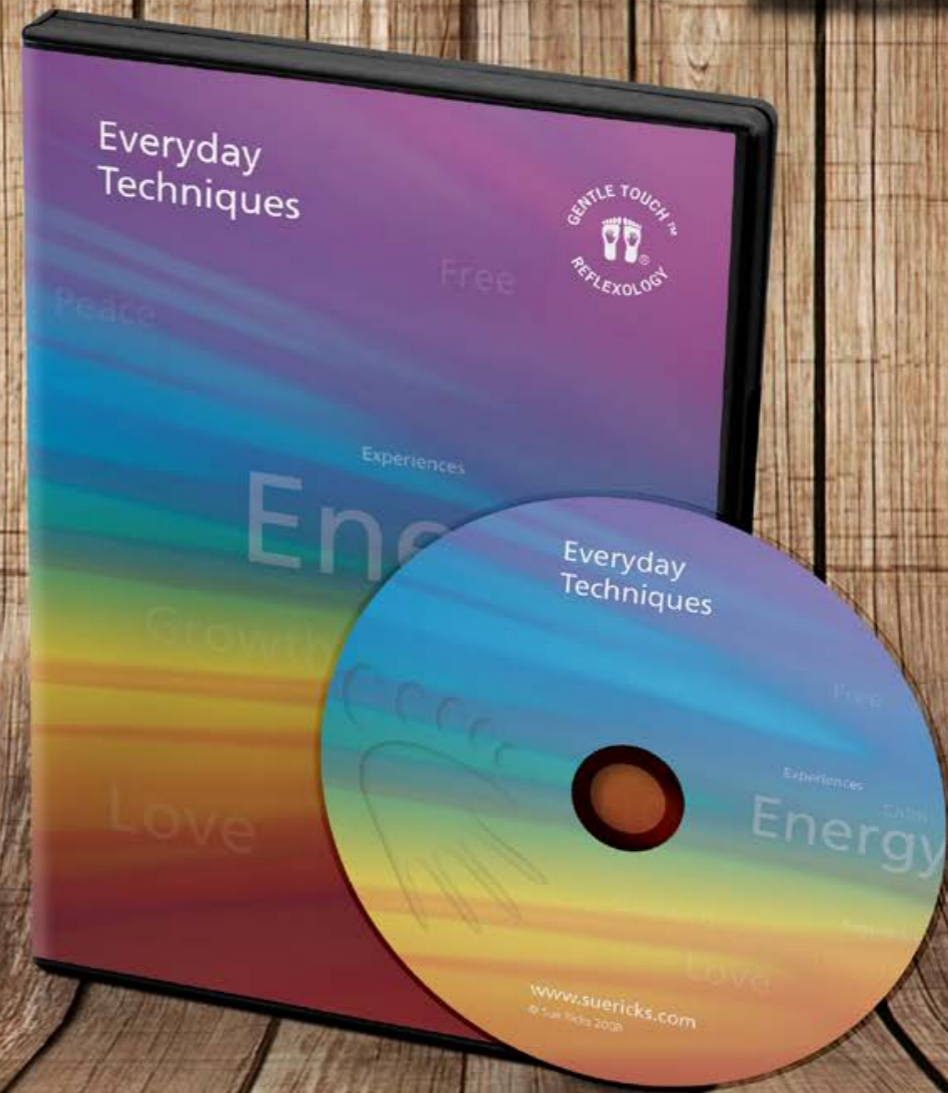
These last few weeks have been a reminder of how effect various therapies and approaches can be. I have seen and heard so many wonderful and moving comments from my client as they undertake their healing journey.

Clients and I have been making the most of Gentle Touch Reflexology, Baby Reflexology, Neuro linguistic programming (NLP), Energy Healing, and some very poignant terminal care.



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# My Path To Reflexology

Hannah Adams, Lull Reflexology.



I found Reflexology, or rather it found me, at a time when I was unhappy in my career. A decade ago I was a magazine Beauty Director; a glamorous and privileged role. But the workload was stressful, especially after returning from maternity leave, leading me to wonder if migraines and exhaustion were worth the perks of the job.



I travelled the world on photo-shoots, was nominated for journalism awards and attended extravagant press launches for lipsticks, but it

came to feel superficial: I craved human connection in my work. Then, I remembered the reflexology I had enjoyed in pregnancy and how it softened my resistant body into a relaxation I no longer thought existed. On a whim I signed up for a weekend reflexology course in London running over a year.



I left that diploma course confused and, if I am honest, unconfident. I learnt the 'belt and braces' techniques, completed 60 case studies and took an anatomy and physiology exam, but there was so much that didn't make sense. As someone previously anchored in deadlines and tight edits, the formulaic approach surprisingly didn't work for me. It seemed too



restrictive. I could feel the gritty, crystallised reflexes my tutors encouraged me to seek, but knew there should be 'more.' I had no idea what the 'more' was though.

It was on a GTR (Gentle Touch Reflexology) course with Sue Ricks that I began to understand what I'd literally been unable to lay my finger on! It was an energetic connection. As Sue chatted about white light and 'protective bubbles' I felt completely out of my comfort zone. I didn't view myself as an intuitive therapist, though in hindsight intuition must have steered me towards the course.

GTR expanded my understanding of the profound subtleties of reflexology. That a touch so light it barely presses the skin could release deep emotional and physical responses blew my mind. I also learnt about resistance and



flow, how energy follows thought, the role of the reflexologist as a conduit and how to wrap a client's feet beautifully in a towel! Seven years on I still use GTR techniques in my daily work, with the infinity relaxation move being one of my favourites.

## REFLEXOLOGY AND PREGNANCY

I hadn't planned to be a pregnancy reflexologist. I was working in a graduate clinic at Neal's Yard Remedies when an expectant lady



booked and it prompted me to seek additional training on Sally Earlam's Maternity Reflexology CPD course. This was another pivotal, career changing moment. Sally's course gave me the tools to work confidently with pregnant women for which I will always be thankful. I have gone on to add Heidi Armstrong's fascinating TCM Pregnancy Reflexology course to my 'tool box' and use elements of Sally Kay's RLD technique for clients suffering from swollen feet and ankles, in the absence of a contraindication such as preeclampsia.

Like many reflexologists, I love working with clients at this special time. The amazing feat of growing a baby will always leave me in awe and it's a privilege to follow a woman's journey from bump

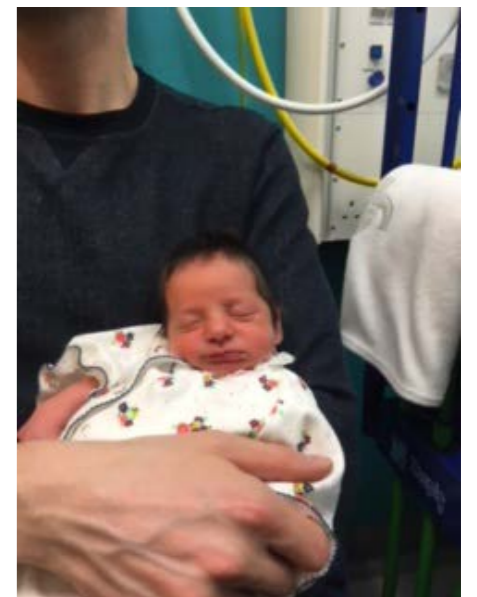


to beyond. Reflexology is such a beneficial treatment, giving mums-to-be time and space for relaxation and bonding. But equally, I have learned that part of being a pregnancy reflexologist means accepting that pregnancy and birth is not always a happy, easy time for every woman. Complications arise, women do bear the awful suffering of miscarriage and stillbirth, a client may be floored by a traumatic birth. Over time, and through experience, reflection and continuing peer support, I now feel able to work with a wider range of women; those sailing through pregnancy with joyful ease and also those who have previously or are currently navigating a more difficult path.



Last year I found myself in this unexpected position when my daughter was born after PPRM (preterm premature rupture of membranes) at 33 weeks. The experience has given me a deeper understanding of the complications of pregnancy and the emotional fallout when things don't go to plan.

If pregnancy is a symbiotic relationship between mother and child then prematurity, with no regard and often no warning, rips that whole apart. It's having a window on a world you shouldn't be able to see, touching, when you are able, a baby you shouldn't be able to touch. It's an excruciating, isolating experience filled with



consultant rounds, incubators and machines that constantly bleep and hum.

There is a saying that your heart lives outside of your body when you have a child in the world, but my heart simply wasn't ready for my daughters to no longer beat alongside mine. I felt an ambiguous, awful grief. A gaping wound of loss tempered only by the gratitude that she was healthy. The two rubbed so rawly together that I was unable to return to work when I had planned, which was devastating. I even considered no longer treating pregnant clients because I imagined it being too painful to hear full-term ladies bemoan (quite understandably) the heavy, uncomfortable last days of pregnancy I had wanted to reach. Thankfully counseling, and more recently hypnotherapy, have enabled me to resume working with my previously held level of intent and enjoyment.

## SUPPORTING PARENTS OF PREMATURE BABIES

Prematurity is little discussed in the context of pregnancy and antenatal classes: I never imagined it happening to me. And, if you have a client who delivers a preterm baby, it's likely that she didn't expect it to happen to her either.

I've gratefully taken the opportunity given here, to share how it feels to have a premature baby and ways in which we, as reflexologists, can support parents.

To leave your house one morning pregnant and blissfully unaware and several hours later realise your baby is coming into the world seven weeks early is surreal and terrifying. All plans for maternity leave, nesting and a healing homebirth vanished then and there.



I was not ready. I was absolutely not ready. There was no hospital bag packed, no baby clothes on the airer for thumb-width limbs and, although we didn't yet know this, the micro nappies we bought would reach up near her armpits.

The usual course of labour is to unfold the path towards birth, but with a preemie if you are not yet in labour, and there is no immediate need for baby to be born, it is generally preferable for them to remain with mum for longer. Although later gestation preemies have a high survival rate, doctors can't assume your baby will be well at birth. We were told that our daughter's incubator had been 'booked' and she would be transferred to another hospital on delivery if she needed intensive care.



The midwives encouraged me to sleep and not to upset myself crying but I couldn't do either. At night, in dark and unfamiliar surroundings, I could hear the sounds of babies being born on the ward. I bumped into a husband and wife embracing with their little bundle pressed between them by the tea station and had to lean against the wall to stifle a sob. I felt anger, failure and shame in equal measure. What type of mother can't keep their baby safe?



On the evening before my daughter was born the tiny, irregular pinches of discomfort that had been happening for days, turned into powerful, rhythmic surges. A tricky footling breech position saw me heading down the corridor at midnight for an emergency section. It was the very opposite of what I'd planned, but I had my 'calm

c-section' MP3 playing and was determined to be present and give her the birth she deserved. I waited for 'the' cry and when I eventually heard it, laughed with relief. Such a shrill, indignant bleat at being lifted into the cold, bright world and then she was gone. I glimpsed a teeny turned-up nose and white bobble hat. I half expected someone to return and hand her to me, but they didn't.

12 hours later I sat and watched my tiny human sleeping in her incubator. Her little lips twitched and quivered on the brink of crying and her tiny brow furrowed. She looked like she was having a bad dream. When I opened the side door to touch her, the smell that escaped floored me. A heady cloud of pheromones trailing a unique warm scent that, powerless to resist, dragged me in. Though I have never felt so vulnerable, every part of her miniature being seemed to vibrate with a strong-willed ambition to exist.

#### TRIGGERS AND BEING MINDFUL

Amongst premature mums there are certain triggers we tend to share. As reflexologists we can be mindful and understanding of the kind of assumptions and statements that could cause unintentional pain.

Language is very powerful. Resist the urge to use phrases like 'oh well, at least she/he is alive.' Of course we are beyond grateful to have our babies, but that doesn't diminish the



trauma of their early arrival. Mums with poorly or very premature babies are likely to have seen their little one spend months in NICU battling, at times, life threatening health issues. These months will be etched into their subconscious and 'at least' can sound awfully flippant. Better to say 'that must have been very difficult/upsetting/traumatic for you. I am here for you.' Ditto commenting 'you would never know,' because we DO know.

'You must be glad to have avoided the last months of pregnancy.' I haven't connected with a premature mum yet who wouldn't give anything to be able to get those 'missing' weeks/months back. We pine for them because it is so very painful to one day have a bump you can cradle and the next, an empty void where your baby should still be. If I could have scooped my daughter up, curled her back inside of me and walked out of hospital I would have.



When you have a premature baby you feel that your body has failed you and you in turn have failed your baby. This makes it very difficult to see pregnant women,

who seem to appear everywhere, sailing along with the innocence you once enjoyed. Women on Facebook wishing their babies out early due to discomfort can also send you into a spiral of rage. These feelings are initially impossible to control and hard to live with. It's lovely when people are mindful and don't tear your wounds open again by remarking 'my daughter-in-law's baby is tucked up nice and safely. That won't be happening to us,' when your heart is still far from healed.

I have found reading around the subject of ambiguous grief very useful as a starting point for understanding a type of grief I wasn't at all familiar with. Ambiguous grief relates to a wide variety of losses, but in my case I found it extremely troubling and intrusive to be grieving for an experience and person (my daughter), when she was alive, healthy and bringing me joy.

On a practical level, adjust your treatment pressure to your clients needs. In the early days I could allow my shoulders to be strongly massaged but not lightly touched. It was just too painful to receive any kind of tenderness. Equally however, I have worked with clients at times of loss using only linking and GTR techniques because a firmer pressure felt too probing. Ask, check in, watch your client and if they become distressed give them the option to take a break or stop if they want to. One of the most helpful things someone has said to me is that they are not afraid to sit with my feelings. Meaning they wouldn't be alarmed or recoil if I sobbed my way through the session.

Know that you could have a client come to you who had a premature baby two years ago but might only just have started to process her feelings about it. In the first year of a preemie's life there are so many issues to focus on like weight gain, feeding problems

and hospital appointments, that provide continual distraction. It is not uncommon, however, for first birthdays to trigger and reveal the true emotional picture. Being there



and offering a safe space for your client to begin to heal and share her feelings, if she wants to, is an amazing gift. Ultimately, clients may benefit from exploring talking therapies or specialised trauma services, but never underestimate a reflexologists listening ear.

Further resources –

- <https://www.bliss.org.uk/>
- <https://www.tommys.org/>
- <http://www.prematurity.org/baby/ambiguous.html>

Hannah Adams



# Quick and Easy Weeding

Recommended by Sue Ricks



I spotted this trick in one of my Dads old books. My parents garden is just beautiful, and this is one tip that I now use extensively.

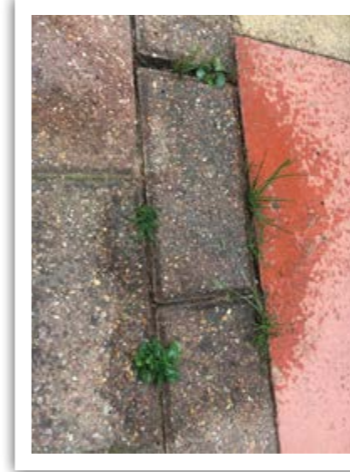
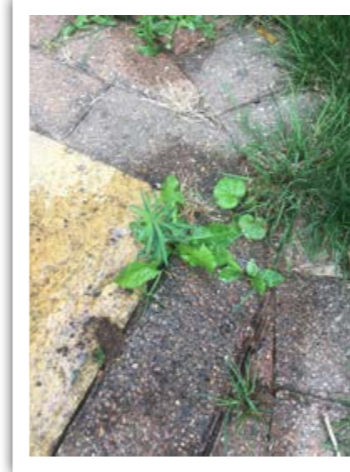
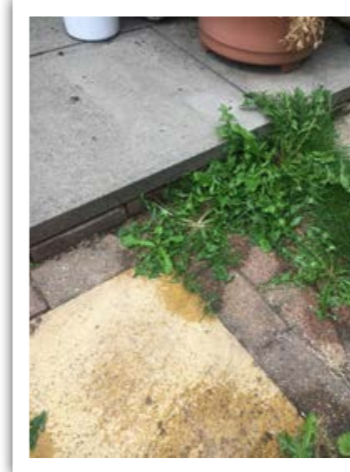
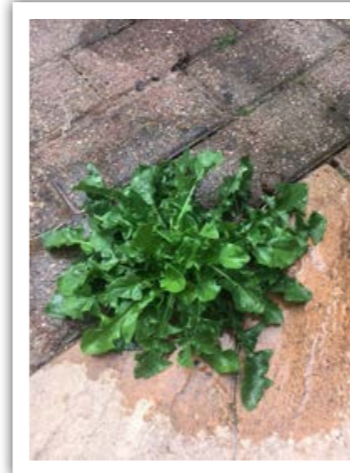
Simply use vinegar to combat weeds!

Put white vinegar into a spray bottle and spray weeds on paths, patio or drives etc. Only use it on isolated weeds as the vinegar will kill anything it touches.

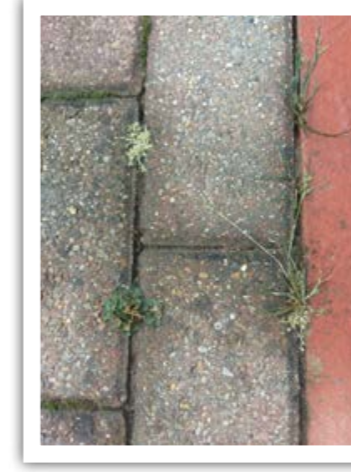
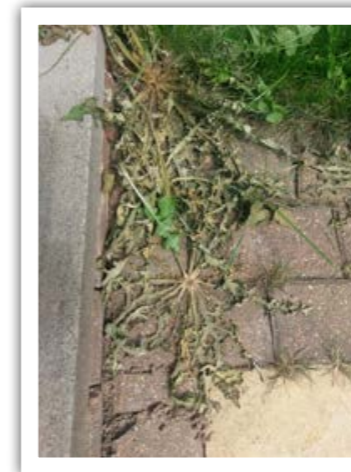
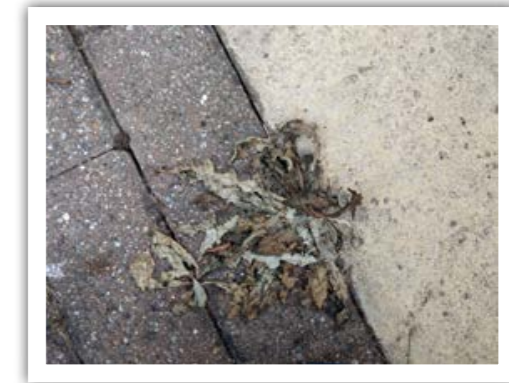
We use 12% vinegar that we buy over the internet and I keep a spray bottle in the kitchen for these occasions when I spot a juicy weed popping up from our patio. When we came back from our holiday we had some real beauties! I took photos to show how effective the vinegar is. I love it as it's so much safer than chemical weed killer.

It works so fast and is so easy to do!

## Before



## After



# RECOMMENDED WEBSITES OR APPS



[OutdoorCanvas.co.uk](http://OutdoorCanvas.co.uk)

I love this site! If you ever fancy brightening a dark corner, blank wall or anywhere...this is your place to investigate.

This site sells canvas images that can be used indoors or outdoors. There are eight different hanging systems from frames to simple canvas with eyelets.

I've used a canvas from them to put over a very plain sliding door and we love it. Much nicer than what was there before!

I also bought one for my Mum and Dad when they wanted something to brighten a dark corridor.

I'd love to put one outside however our garden is full of plants and trees! I know that if I had a blank wall I'd be putting one of theirs up.

Take a look. They are beautiful and have such a huge range of images. We've only put a few here to give you a glimpse of some plus how they can transform spaces.

Enjoy!



## International Foot Reading Conference 2018



20th  
September  
2018  
East Midlands, UK

Book online now at [www.suericks.com](http://www.suericks.com)

# TRAVEL RECOMMENDATIONS



## Derbyshire

I love Derbyshire and feel so lucky that it's right next to Leicestershire where I live. I thought I'd tell you a little bit more about it in case it inspires you to revisit or take a first look at its glorious countryside.

Derbyshire is right in the heart of England as it's about as close to the centre as you can get.

It's a truly beautiful county with rolling hills, rugged peaks, beautiful stone buildings and lush flowing rivers and streams.

It's such a great place to unwind, go walking or sample a gorgeous Derbyshire afternoon tea! It's such a great place to go for day trips or holidays.

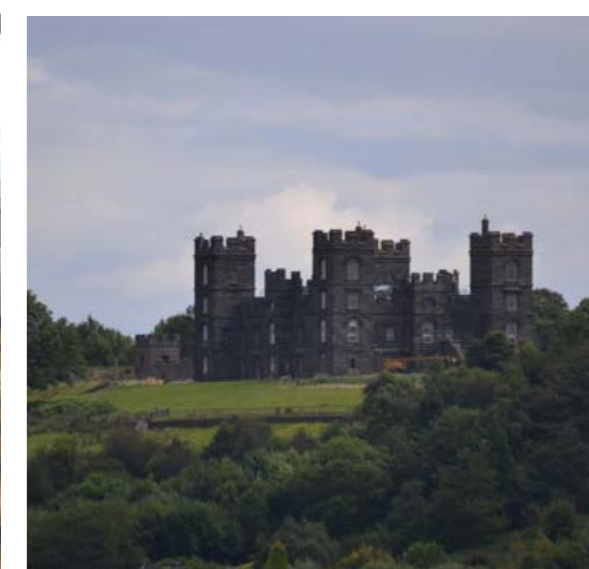
Some of the most popular places are wonderful to see and experience and there are oodles of places that are quiet and secluded.

A favourite area of ours is around Matlock with Chatsworth House (built in 1500's) which is amazing in itself, plus there are truly gorgeous gardens and park designed by Capability Brown, Matlock Bath with the cable car to the Heights of Abraham and views throughout the county.

There are some fabulous walks throughout the peak district including a favourite one in Dovedale. If you get a chance to see the Well Dressings (pictures made out of petals) that can be seen between May and September and have seen to be believed you will love them!

There are caves at Castleton with the Speedwell Cavern where you can take a boat trip and see the magnificent Blue John crystal. There's a huge vase of it in Chatsworth House plus a really huge foot! Great for doing some reflexology on the way round.

We love the trams at Crich Tramway village. A real blast from the past. People Even take their dogs for a ride. We've had many a great day out there. My grandkids love it.





Sue Ricks

# Dates for your Diary

Energy Healing (Including Chakra Balancing and Past experience healing via the feet)

18-19  
September

20

September

International Foot Reading Conference 2018 - Booking Closes Monday 17th Sept 18!

Reflexology for Babies and Children Practitioner and Instructor Training - Linthicum Heights, Maryland USA

4 - 7  
October

5 - 8

November

Gentle Touch Reflexology 4 day workshop with Sue Ricks

Reflexology to support those with Dementia or Alzheimers

13  
Nov

19-22

Nov 2018

Reflexology for Babies and Children Practitioner and Instructor Training

Cancer & Palliative Care - helping people via Reflexology

22  
Jan 2019

4 - 7

Feb 2019

Reflexology for Babies and Children Practitioner and Instructor Training – SOUTH EAST LONDON

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## Bite Sized Info!

“I love that the content is in small bite sized chunks - perfect for watching over a cup of coffee” - Lisa D

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## Cheesecake (Cheat)

### Ingredients

- 8 oz Ginger Biscuits
- 3.5 oz butter/margarine
- 1/2 pint double cream
- Large tin condensed milk (full or light)
- Juice 3 large lemons
- Tip - Chill lemons and condensed milk before making cheesecake**

### Method

1. Grind /liquidise ginger biscuits into fine crumb
2. Gently melt butter/margarine
3. Stir in ginger biscuit crumb.
4. Press ginger crumb mix into 8 inch flan base, (I use loose bottom cake tin or flan ring onto serving plate)
5. Whip cream until it starts to thicken, gently pour in condensed milk whilst still whipping cream mixture
6. Pour in lemon juice (sieved).
7. Stir to make sure all combined
8. Spoon onto ginger biscuit base
9. Chill
10. Decorate and serve.

Luxurious and delicious!

# LIGHT UP

## Creative



**WEDDINGS**

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With love

Sue

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