

Gillian Burn, May 2019

My Mind Mapping Journey with Tony Buzan

I was first introduced to Mind Mapping as a student midwife in 1980 – my astute tutor showed me the technique which helped me pass my written exams, and, transformed my learning since that day. I still have my original copy of the BBC book written by Tony, Use Your Head which introduced me to Mind Mapping. I continued to use the technique during my further nursing career and subsequent master's degree and open university management courses. When joining BUPA in 1987, I would mind map my way through client meetings, project plans and was always asked to summarise the meetings I attended. I often received strange looks and comments from people who wondered what I was doing with my coloured pens! However, when I left BUPA after some 12 years, I was reassured that 'other people were starting to mind map as well'!

On leaving BUPA in 1999, I commenced further training with the Buzan Organisation in Bournemouth, as it was then called, and continued my journey teaching mind mapping, and speed reading. I also joined a very special holiday in 2001 with like-minded Mind Mappers, called the Floating University for the Mind with Tony Buzan and Vanda North writing and relaxing on a yacht on the Aegean Sea off the south coast of Turkey. Special memories I have to this day.

I introduced my 13 year old nephew, David to mind mapping when he was struggling at school with dyslexia. He went on to achieve a PhD in Physics and is now an amazing guy with his potential unlocked with the help, I believe, of mind mapping as he journeys further into the field of physics as a research scientist.

My memories of Tony Buzan are of an amazing man, who on one occasion invited me along with other friends and colleagues to a Burns Night celebration in Henley. I remember to this day the inspiration of Tony Buzan that evening and how he carefully introduced me to people including his wonderful mother Jean Buzan, who was living in Canada at the time, and had the same maiden name as myself, Burn.

I was also invited to present with Tony back in July 1999 to a group of Doctors to describe my own mind mapping journey as a midwife, to working with the Flying Doctor service in the Australian outback and bringing my belief in health promotion back to work in the UK. During that presentation I described my belief that mind maps 'help unleash the hidden potential in all of us'. A belief I still hold true. Some 20 years on within my own company Health Circles, my work focuses on creating a healthy mind and healthy body for my clients delivering personal development training and teaching pilates exercise classes. I continue to use Mind Maps regularly in my work for class plans, project work and writing projects and, in my personal life for planning and day to day tasks.

Tony Buzan's sudden death is a shock to us all, an amazing gifted man who helped so many people unlock the genius of the mind. I will treasure the difference he made in my life and my career. I will continue to show people the wonderful skill of mind mapping, including teaching my own children to have fun with mind maps as they continue their education and learning journey.

I believe Tony will continue to watch over us with his amazing legacy to the world.

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