Fascia has been described as a liquid crystalline matrix, which is basically a single sheet of connective tissue, made primarily from bundles of collagen fibers, that wraps every structure in the body, including muscle, bone, nerve, artery, vein, organs, heart, lungs, brain and spinal cord. These fascial fibers can bind together to form thicker branches, giving form to the body, or single fibers can separate from the branch forming a more complex system. Neuroscientists have come to believe that fascia is the structure that carries consciousness.

Fascial fibres are hollow tubes filled with fluid that have the ability to conduct light, similar to fiber optics. Consequently, they can relay information to the brain faster than nerve impulses. They provide separation between structures, preventing for example, muscles from rubbing together. They can store and release kinetic energy. In a fight or flight situation, fascia can clamp down on blood vessels and nerves, slowing down potential blood loss and dulling potential pain sensations.

In its healthy state, the fascia is relaxed and wavy, able to stretch and move without restriction. In the event of physical or emotional trauma, scarring, or inflammation, the fascial system loses its elasticity and becomes a source of tension in the body. Ultimately, pain and restricted motion result.

There are three different layers of fascia, including superficial, visceral and deep. The superficial layer lies beneath the skin and is made up of areolar tissue or tissue with small open spaces, and varying amounts of fat. This layer surrounds organs, glands and neurovascular bundles. It can stretch to allow for increased fat cells and revert back to its normal elasticity following the loss of fat cells. The visceral layer suspends organs in the abdominal cavity where each organ has a double layer of fascia. This layer is not as elastic as the superficial layer since organs have to be suspended at a very precise tension. Too much elasticity could result in prolapse of the organ where it could literally fall out of its place. Too little elasticity could impinge on the motility of the organ or its ability to move spontaneously. This could cause serious problems in the gastro-intestinal tract. The deep layer consists of dense elastic fibrous connective tissue that surrounds muscles, bones, nerves and blood vessels.

Bowen Therapy naturally addresses fascia by working on the superficial layer. We gently stimulate this layer at precise points on the body through a series of light moves that are comprised of rolls and waves. The slack in the skin is gently moved over the underlying tissue or fascia, and if we remember that not only is all fascia connected together, but it can send information to the brain faster than a nerve impulse, then we can start to understand the tremendous healing power present whenever we perform a Bowen move. We are stimulating the entire body each time we lay our hands on an animal and perform something as simple as a gentle roll.