

The AoR Board

"Shaping the Future of Reflexology, One Step at a Time."



ASSOCIATION OF REFLEXOLOGISTS



***"Devoted to Elevating
Reflexology Standards for
nearly 40 Years."***

With every step, our **board members** exemplify the values that define the AoR: professionalism, integrity, and a profound commitment to reflexology. Each member brings a unique blend of expertise, experience, and enthusiasm, united by a shared vision to elevate reflexology to new heights and empower both practitioners and clients alike.

As you get to know our Board, you will uncover the extraordinary stories and achievements of these remarkable individuals. From seasoned experts to emerging talents, our board comprises a diverse tapestry of reflexology professionals, all united by their unwavering dedication to promoting the art and science of reflexology.

Behind the scenes, the AoR board works tirelessly to advocate for the recognition and regulation of reflexology, ensuring the highest standards of practice and professional development. With a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, they diligently shape the future of reflexology, seeking collaborations, driving research, and fostering a supportive community that nurtures growth and excellence.

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The AOR BOARD

Welcome to the Association of Reflexologists! Our dedicated Board ensures excellence in reflexology practice. We foster professional development, uphold ethical standards, and advocate for the field's recognition. By supporting our members through education, resources, and networking opportunities, we empower reflexologists to provide exceptional care to clients. Join us in advancing the art and science of reflexology for a healthier, balanced world.

"Supporting Reflexologists on Their Journey Since 1984"



DEBORAH COOK CHAIR

"I believe that to be well and healthy, there has to be a balance of mind, spirit and physical health"

For as long as I remember I wanted to be a nurse and qualified in 1986 at a large teaching hospital. Throughout my nursing career, and now, I believe that to be well and healthy, there has to be a balance of mind, spirit and physical health, and have witnessed on many occasions how a sense of well-being is vital to heal. Most of my nursing was in the Emergency Department setting, full of stress and heightened emotions. Reflexology found me when I was exploring ways to expand my horizons and have more balance in my life – I had gone to the local college to enrol for aromatherapy and ended up on the Reflexology course, I went home and read all about it, and it was the best ‘mistake’ I have ever made! I qualified in 2002 and have been a Member of the Association of Reflexologists since 2004. Reflexology challenged the ‘evidence-based practice’ approach that was drummed into me as a nurse, and educator; however, the body of evidence is growing, and perhaps there are some things, that we do not yet have enough science to explain. By increasing uptake and spreading the word about Reflexology will begin to address this gap, and therefore I believe that the Reflexology Ambassador scheme is vital.

From 2004 until 2022, I taught holistic health assessment skills at the local University. The students were registered health professionals undertaking a Masters in Advanced Clinical Practice. During my teaching time, I was in a privileged position and introduced all my cohorts to aspects of complementary therapies, something they may not have previously considered. I also introduced Reflexology relaxation techniques prior to their clinical examinations, which was well received. I have been invited back to share how Reflexology can help staff with their health and wellbeing. In March 2022, I joined a large NHS Trust as the Quality Lead in the education provided by a School of Nursing, Allied Health Professionals and Midwifery. It has been an exciting challenge so far and I am still learning every day. Reflexology continues to fascinate me, and I am constantly learning and developing. Following my diploma in Reflexology I have undertaken formal training in VRT, Hand reflexology and Aromaflex, as well as maintaining my annual CPD requirement. I have been able to work with such a variety of clients: volunteering for 16 years at a hospice, treating staff, patients and carers; giving talks and treatments for the local Multiple Sclerosis group and more recently with a Pulmonary Rehabilitation group, as well as my private practice clients. Reflecting on my academic side, I was invited to write a chapter in a book concerning the use of Reflexology in Infertility and was involved in a research project concerning the use of complementary therapies with patients receiving palliative care.

In my spare time I enjoy reading, try to keep fit with the gym, Pilates and Ceroc dancing, and in the last year have returned to playing the piano. I have been a board member for the Association of Reflexologists since 2020 and hope to be a part of taking Reflexology into the lives of others, and taking our organisation into the future.

Deborah joined the Board in May 2020



HEIDI ARMSTRONG VICE CHAIR

"I am extremely passionate about education and standards"

I have been studying Holistic therapies since completing a Massage and Anatomy course in 1993. I then went on to do a full time Diploma in Holistic Therapies graduating in 1996, which included reflexology. Following this I trained in Shiatsu, qualifying in 2001 with the Bristol School of Shiatsu. I am very passionate about CPD and have continued to add training and specialties to my practice.

I started teaching in 2003 training in Adult education City and Guilds level 4 in 2007 and DTTLES Level 5 in 2015 to round my Heidi Armstrong teaching experience and qualifications. I have taught Shiatsu, Reflexology, Massage, Aromatherapy and Anatomy and Physiology in several schools including Bath City College. I am passionate about personal development and reflective practice and trained in Supervision with the CSTD centre for Supervision in Bath. I now mainly teach CPD training and am very happy to be involved with the AoR's Advanced Level 5 modules.

I am extremely passionate about education and standards and joined the Board in 2020 with the aim to support the AoR in their mission to raise the standards of Reflexology Training.

Heidi joined the Board in May 2020



JUDITH WHATLEY

"I am committed to building an evidence base for reflexology"

I am a Senior Lecturer in Clinical reflexology and Research Methods at Cardiff Metropolitan University and a Psychology graduate with a Masters in research methods. I am also a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a practising reflexologist with over 25 years experience. I am committed to building an evidence base for reflexology and I'm particularly interested in the physiological changes which occur during a reflexology treatment. In 2015, I was project leader of a study into the effects of reflexology lymphatic drainage (RLD) on breast cancer related lymphoedema. This technique of lymphatic drainage, developed by Sally Kay, offered a unique opportunity to measure in real time the effects of reflexology. Three academic papers have now been published looking at the impact of reflexology on the movement of lymphoedema after breast cancer. The last of these used Thermal imaging cameras to view the movement of lymphatic fluid in the arm. Further studies are planned using this technology in the monitoring of wound healing when using reflexology treatment. As part of my academic work I am the Academic Lead for the final year research dissertations on the University's undergraduate programmes in complementary healthcare and I also lecture at Masters Level and lead the 'Developing Research Skills' modules, along with supervising Masters level research projects. This affords me the opportunity to guide and mentor those students wishing to develop their research projects in reflexology and other therapies. I have publications in academic journals such as Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice, and the British Journal of Community Nursing and a variety of professional publications, such as Reflexions and International Therapist. In 2014 I was awarded the Association of Reflexologists Tutor of the year. In both 2017 and 2020 I was 'Highly commended' in the Higher Education 'Teaching Excellence' awards, and I was awarded the AoR Research Excellence Award in 2018. Along with my colleagues Jo Perkins and Dr Carol Samuel we have recently published an academic paper exploring the mechanism of action of reflexology and proposed links with fascia. I have lectured widely at conferences in the UK and in the US, winning the 'best presentation' prize at the CAMSTRAND conference at the University of Warwick in 2016. 'Building a case for reflexology starts with measurement. Once we know how to measure in a controlled way, we can start to build the argument which will take reflexology into hospital wards, and into GP's surgeries where it can be offered as a real complement to medicine and surgery, offering gentle but powerful symptom control at all levels of illness. Reflexology has been my passion for a quarter of a century but I do have a life outside the profession. I've been married for nearly 40 years, and have a grown up son and daughter. I also love my garden and I do like to walk and cycle when visiting lovely little tranquil corners of the country. I also enjoy history, architecture, art, yoga, crochet, baking and various painting and craft projects (many started, few completed). I'm an avid reader and I always have six or seven books on the go. Life is busy but I wouldn't want it any other way. After all, there's nothing on the telly!

Judith joined the Board in May 2022



NAOMI WILSON

"The Association of Reflexologists needs to be recognised as THE Voice for Reflexology"

I am passionate about the benefits holistic therapies can bring to our well-being to combat the many stresses that have an adverse effect on our physical, emotional and spiritual selves. From the age of 14 I wanted to be an aromatherapist as my mum had attended a course, I read the book she was given and she has never seen it since! At 17 I was introduced to the wonderful world of reflexology to help manage my sinusitis. My wonderful reflexologist (an AoR member) has been a part of my life ever since (30+years) supporting me manage many other ailments over that time in addition to encouraging me to learn Reflexology.

I qualified as a holistic therapist in 2004 at the Jane Rochfort College of Complimentary Therapy and became a member of the International Federation of Aromatherapists (IFA). Keen to keep learning, I completed my Diploma in Reflexology with the Devon School of Reflexology accredited by the Association of Reflexologists in August 2019. I have 5 years' experience as a practicing Reflexologist and have set up and continue to run my own successful full-time practice in holistic therapies. I have undertaken CPD courses over the past 4 Years including Sally Kay's Lymphatic Drainage Reflexology, Karen Middleton's Ear Reflexology, Carol Samuel's Nerve Reflexology for Pain Management, Sally Earlam's Reflexology for Menopause and Heidi Armstrong's Five Elements Reflexology as well as my own personal research. I strongly believe in continuing to develop my skills as a therapist to ultimately provide my clients with tailored treatments that best suit their needs.

I have experienced the value the AoR provides to me, as a member, through the AoRs wealth of resources including personal availability to members through the helpline and social media presence, Reflexions magazine, Newsletters, website and World Reflexology Week.

Prior to training as a Reflexologist, I worked as a People Communications Consultant, and with this experience I relish the opportunity to assist the AoR and be part of shaping the future for the organisation, including the communications and digital marketing strategies to enhance communications to members, stakeholders and to the public to ensure that the fabulous work the AoR do for both their members, for reflexology and for the wider complementary therapies industry is broadcast loud and clear!

Given the benefits I see my clients experiencing from reflexology treatments, I would love to see reflexology fully recognised within the NHS.

The AoR provides so much for our members we need to ensure there is no complacency and encourage new members to join by being recognised as the 'Voice' for Reflexology.

When I'm not working, I love exploring with my dog, cycling and swimming, attending music concerts, travelling, spending time with friends and in quieter times reading with my cats sat on me!

Naomi joined the Board in May 2023



KATHY FEAR FINANCE

"I am passionate about all that the AoR stand for"

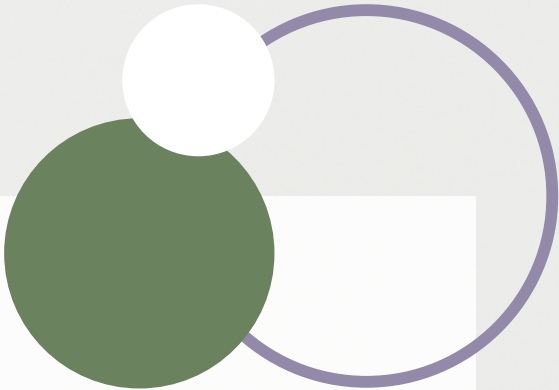
With over 40 years experience in financial roles and having previously been the finance manager for the AoR for over 5 years, I have a very good understanding of the business model and the challenges that the Association faces.

Although I am not a reflexologist, I have learnt, over the those years at the Association, to appreciate the benefits of reflexology and the vital role it has in complementary therapies. I am a firm supporter of its furtherance in the public eye.


To have the chance to stay connected to the AoR, it's mission and it's wonderful staff team and members is an opportunity I could not refuse!

Kathy is AAT and CIMA qualified and worked as Finance Manager for the AoR from July 2017 to July 2022. As she is not a Reflexologist, Kathy joins the Board as a non-voting member.

Kathy joined the Board in May 2023



*"Become a part of
something greater:
The Association of
Reflexologists and its
commitment to
excellence in
reflexology practice."*



JOIN US

By joining the AoR board, you become an integral part of a team of like-minded individuals, united by a shared vision and a commitment to excellence. Your unique skills, expertise, and perspective will help shape the future of reflexology.

As a board member, you will have the opportunity to contribute your knowledge, insights, and innovative ideas to drive the growth and recognition of reflexology. Your voice will be heard, your initiatives supported, and your contributions celebrated.

Beyond the personal and professional growth that comes with board membership, you will also have the chance to make a meaningful impact on the lives of reflexology practitioners and clients worldwide. Your dedication will help shape policies, create pathways for success and ensure growth for the organisation.

So, take a moment to reflect on the extraordinary possibilities that lie ahead. Consider the the connections you can forge and the profound impact you could have on the future of the Association and on reflexology.

We invite you to join us. Together we can unlock the full potential of reflexology, create a future where reflexology thrives, where its remarkable benefits are known, and where practitioners find unwavering support on their path to success.

Your journey begins here, and the possibilities are limitless.

For more information and an application form please contact: info@aor.org.uk

