

NETWORK SPINAL ANALYSIS (NSA)

Allowing a Higher Level of Human Function

Interview with Dr. Donald Epstein - Jenny Thomas (InTouch Magazine)

Doctor Donald Epstein, founder of NSA visited New Zealand recently. InTouch was privileged to speak with him and this article is based on that conversation.

From time to time an extremely elegant and sublimely simple procedure or protocol will arise from an already existing, long established technique.

Network Spinal Analysis could be described in this way, arising as it did when in 1982, New York Chiropractor, Doctor Donald Epstein began “networking” various chiropractic techniques. Through meticulous observation and by comparing the findings and results of one method with another, he began to see the efficacy of marrying certain techniques in a manner which enables the practitioner, through the use of light touch to release large amounts of spinal tension from a patient. Although this might not sound very dramatic, it is a fact that the absolutely remarkable ‘life-changing’ ways in which patients respond to this method of care has become a hallmark of NSA. This unique approach to health is a synthesis of long standing chiropractic methods, quantum mechanics, neuroanatomy and neurophysiology while also acknowledging changing perspectives in health care. In Doctor Epstein’s case, these changes involve an expanded interpretation of the concept of ‘wellness’.

Dr Epstein: “Network Spinal Analysis sits within a new paradigm which I have been developing internationally and that’s called the Wellness Paradigm. Wellness is not about whether a person has disease. It’s about their internal experience of their body, the ability to make constructive healthy choices, and their ability to enjoy life and be well. Wellness is that state of concern in which you are relatively invincible, nothing can ruin your day, you feel alive, vital and confident and experience a high state of well-being. When you experience wellness, your circumstances of the moment do not easily upset your internal state.”

Findings from Network care have been documented in major University studies which examine the social science and bio-medical indicators of wellness by looking at a variety of different things people do to increase their health levels. A person who meditates daily, has buns of steel from exercise and the most expensive urine on the planet from supplements, and who has stopped doing the destructive things, will



double their perceived wellness factor. However, if that person then adds Network Care, their wellness factor - their ability to make healthy life choices and stick to them - trebles!”

“What we are looking at here is an experience of life beyond the usual form. A more subtle engagement with the parts of the brain that allow a person to express their higher level of humanity and function occurs

so that a greater capacity to express more connections of compassion and love arises. I call these ‘higher end social changes’, because there are spiritual connotations involved. The individual is different in the way they relate to others and their environment. They can be instrumental in helping create a more compassionately productive community.”

To understand the ‘mechanics’ of NSA, we must first remind ourselves that the spine is composed of bones sitting on top of each other with discs or pads in-between. These bones or vertebrae have holes like donuts in them. These holes create a spinal-canal for the spinal cord which extends from the base of the brain to the tail-bone. The central nervous system is comprised of the brain and the spinal cord and is supported by an intricate system of tissues called the meninges, that are filled with fluid which nourishes and protects the nervous system, all of which sits within the spinal canal, protected by the bony vertebrae. Connective tissue attaches this system to the top and bottom of the spine and this tissue is subject to stresses, tension and distortion.

We perceive our world through the nervous system. It is also through the nervous system that we coordinate the function of every cell, organ and tissue in the body. Every region of the body and every emotion is expressed through the nervous system. Also it’s the part of us with which we reason and which adapts us to stress and it’s the vehicle we use to create our conscious reality. So, when an event occurs that our brain decides is not safe

for us to fully experience at that particular time, the energy and information of the event is translated into vibration and tension, which is then stored in the body. This tension begins to distort the spinal system: Spinal bones (the vertebrae) lose their normal alignment and muscles and ligaments strain and pull. Nerves can become compressed or stretched and irritated which results in abnormal function. As the nervous system is put under pressure, the spine is no longer able to right itself without outside help. Our body then 'closes off' the offending energy and tension, but over time, muscular tightness, spinal distortion, reduced breathing into the area occurs and consequently reduced movement results. Until it is safe to experience that energy again, and digest the information from the trauma, we cannot really feel whole or well.

Dr Epstein: "This is a very real thing - anyone who is at the crossroads of life, physically, emotionally or spiritually, or anyone who cannot get further than they were before needs Network care to help their brain to move from stress physiology which results in a person's structure being fixed in defence posture. In fact most of us remain in defence mode throughout our lives and this can retard the higher, more evolved area of the brain from developing its unique properties and evolving new strategies for experiencing and responding to life. There are many people whose vertebrae, ligaments and tissues are locked into stress patterns, creating so much tension, that their focus in life is just getting through another day! Network care allows the brain to move from the stress physiology into safety."

So how does the practitioner go about relieving this stress?

Dr Epstein: "I found that by using gentle and specific touches in a consistent sequence, where the spinal cord attaches to the spine, a patient's own body learns to release complex patterns of tension and areas of disablement. Once this has been achieved, a further unwinding of deeper tensions from the spine occurs. These 'touches' consist of gentle finger or hand contacts applied at 'spinal gateways' or 'access points' along the neck and lower spine. They are applied in such a way as to engage the higher part of the brain, the frontal lobes of the cerebral cortex. This is the most recently developed region of our brain and is the area through which we observe ourselves and make choices regarding our behaviour. This is the area through which we can reach a higher level of humanity, one which embraces spirituality and evolution."

During Network Spinal Analysis care, two 'healing waves' develop. One is a breathing wave which releases tension throughout the spine and body and relaxes a person. The other is called somatopsychic (or body-

mind) wave, which is associated with undulation or movement of the spine.

Dr Epstein: "The mathematics of this wave are unique because it appears that this type of wave has not been reported anywhere else, so it has to be a signature in Network care. The theory being purported now suggests that as the individual progresses through levels of care, that wave, that signal along the spine is organising high levels of complexity. That means there's more letters in the language - more words available and ultimately more information becomes accessible. There is an evolutionary aspect to this in that there is an increase in the ability of the system to self-organise so it can have more appropriate views about the environment and become more energy efficient. Thus an outcome is produced, that is significantly beneficial to the species and that was not there before".

"What we are looking for in Network is for the system itself to reorganise and develop strategies for experiencing and releasing tension on its own. In the first level of care, which may last a few weeks, the person develops a strategy to connect the brain to the body more effectively and to develop a capacity for self-correction of the tension patterns. The care programme encourages the development of spontaneous stretching movements and breath movements which help release tension in the spine. In the second level of care, we are looking for the brain to be aware of the person's tension, and actually temporarily amplify that tension and redirect it so that the tension actually becomes the fuel for further healing and transformation. Tension is what holds a person anchored in a position of non-safety. Lack of safety is the basis for all physiological stress and the way we accumulate this stress is directly associated with the way we experience our world."

Dr Epstein: "I would like to see Network Spinal Analysis practitioners in places like cancer clinics and working with people who have had recent heart attacks; serious trauma patients and those who have had emotional traumas as children. I see Network Care not as competing with the existing medical paradigm, but instead offering a totally different approach that says no matter what you do about the disease, allow that person to be upgraded from say a 64k computer to a Pentium. Allow them to develop new strategies that they never had before and that person will make healthier choices. They will become more at peace and ease with their life and they will have a greater capacity to heal which often means the disease going away. And if the disease doesn't go away, at least that person's life is going to be richer than it was before. Network Care is an approach to wellness that embraces everyone. Babies, children, seniors. All can develop these strategies which allow a higher level of function."

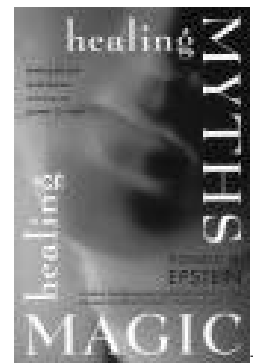
“A man who came to a talk I was giving, told me he had metastatic prostate cancer. He had had surgery and radiation treatments and the cancer had gone away but now it was back and spreading and he was very worried. I asked him what he was afraid of and if he was afraid of dying. He said, “No, I’m afraid of the way I have to die if I go for further chemotherapy and radiation.” It is upsetting that the treatment has to take away a person’s dignity which in my opinion can never heal. But I asked him what he would have to do differently if he was going to die. He said that he would have to get his affairs in order so I asked him what he meant by that. “Well,” he said, “I haven’t spoken to my son in twenty years and I never forgave my wife for dying.” And he went through a variety of things. I asked him why he would have to do these things. He said so that he could die in peace and I said, “Sir, this is a mistake, it’s so you can *live* in peace.” For some people, the only way they can make the changes which will enable them to live in peace is at the very end of their life.”

“And the point of this is - there are people who have cancer who never know it and who live full and perfectly wonderful lives. I know of one Network doctor I met at a seminar recently who told people that she is more alive, more compassionate and responsive with more feelings of gratitude than ever before. Six months previously, she had a breast removed, and for six weeks before that she had received chemotherapy. The other people who had had chemotherapy and surgery at the same time were not receiving Network care. Her internal state of wellness was so high irrespective of her circumstance, that she could be well and produce the physiology that would allow for a person to heal.”

Dr Epstein: “When someone comes to me for care, ***I do not have to know what it was that caused that person’s problem. What I do know, is how to intervene, to help their system to observe itself and to make a change.*** I have clinically dedicated myself to furthering the knowledge of the biological links which will help us express a greater range of our humanity. I believe that by optimising an individual’s biology, Network Spinal Analysis will facilitate positive transformation on a global scale, changing the world, ***a spine at a time.***”

Dr Donald Epstein has written three books:

“The 12 Stages of Healing”, “The Boomerang Principle”, and most recently, “Healing Myths, Healing Magic”. This “magic” book deals with breaking the spell of old illusions and reclaiming our own power to heal”.



“Our minds and bodies, which Dr Epstein believes are so interwoven that he refers to them as bodymind are profoundly influenced by the myths we accept without question. All that we encounter in life is filtered through our belief system and categorised according to the truth we hold about that experience. When we become ill, whatever healing specialist or doctor we consult will likewise label our experience as seen through the lens of that particular practitioner or modality. Our response to illness or disease is directly linked to whatever belief we have about it. By exploring the myths and stories surrounding this fall from the natural state of grace and presenting simple and powerful ways to create your own new healing stories, “Healing Myths, Healing Magic”, offers the opportunity for us to reclaim our innate healing powers and begin the journey back to wholeness.”

To obtain a copy of this book in New Zealand, contact: Pathfinder Book Shop, 38 Lorne St, Auckland. 0800 55 44 55, or it can be ordered directly from The NSA Website: <http://www.donaldepstein.com/>

InTouch wishes to thank Dr Graham Dobson & Dr Robert McLeod for their help and support in the preparation of this article.