

Of Spines and Healing

An Interview With Pierre Gremaud, DC

October, 2004



I: What is the favorite part of your job?

P: I would say the favorite part of my job is giving people reality that their bodies are amazing and wonderful, even if they have felt sick or broken for years. Even if they have had all these labels and diagnoses, their bodies actually have been working as well as they could, given the fact that they have been twisted and blocked. I love finding those blockages and then removing them. I love watching people get well and getting them to become friends with their bodies again, and appreciate how marvelous they are.

I: Tell me a little bit about yourself and how you became involved in healthcare.

P: Well, let me see. I first started getting interested in spines when I was 19 when I picked up a book on yoga and started learning how the postures and breathing could alter the flow of energy in the body. I began doing yoga regularly at age 19, and also became trained in shiatsu and massage therapy and the eastern ways of looking at the body.

I got pretty seriously hurt while in my mid 20's and began having a lot of health problems. I quickly saw how little the medical profession had to offer me. At that point, in the early 80's, I received traditional acupuncture (which saved my life), and I also went to a chiropractor for the first time. I wasn't impressed with him at all really. I was more impressed with what the pamphlets in his office were saying than with what he was doing. There seemed to be a large discrepancy between the philosophy of chiropractic and what he was doing in his office. I kind of let it go at that.

My spinal and health problems continued, and eventually, while living in Seattle, I went to another chiropractor, and although it wasn't terrific, it was enough for me to know that I cared about spines and that I wanted to work with people and their spines. I wanted to become a doctor, and chiropractic was the best thing I'd seen out there so far. So I thought I'd just get the degree and call myself a chiropractor and do whatever I wanted to do using that license.

I went to chiropractic school as a second career in my 30's. Chiropractic school was four years. I really appreciated all the time we spent (the whole first year) exploring cadavers, inside and out. I was always the first person in the lab and the last person to leave. I was awed at seeing how the body was put together.

In the late 80's, I came across Dr. Donald Epstein, who had developed a system of spinal analysis he called Network. It was a brilliant, approach to examining the body and checking for the health of the spine and nervous system. I threw myself into that for 14 years. I learned a lot. I grew a lot. I learned how to be with people in an authentic way.

I learned from a master how to listen and how to observe and how to develop all my senses. I learned how the shape of someone's spine has a tremendous influence on their health, and on their outlook on life. I learned how spinal flexibility and physiological and emotional flexibility are all related. I discovered this all within myself as well. I was undergoing tremendous personal changes as my spine was changing and my breath patterns were changing. I am extremely grateful for some of my early teachers and experiences.

I: And then what happened?

P: Well, I came to a dead-end in the kind of work that I was doing (Network at the time), and the early gains that I'd gotten were diminishing. I was in my mid 40's and was feeling worse and worse [I now know why]. I felt like I needed more and more things just to get by. I had to take hour-long naps every day. I took a month off from work and went to Costa Rica , and that really didn't do it. I became a yoga teacher. I thought more rest would do it. My spine was very twisted up, and I was basically trying to convince myself that I wasn't getting sick or wasn't breaking down. It turns out that I was. I was also getting frustrated with not being able to produce the results that I told people I wanted to produce. The theoretical clinical gains really weren't showing up for me, and I saw that it really wasn't happening in other offices either, so I wasn't taking my results personally. To make a long story short, I came across the writings of Dr. Jesse Jutkowitz describing Advanced Biostructural Correction™ , and it made sense to me. It made so much sense that I said, "It can't be that easy. If it was that easy, why wouldn't everyone be doing it?" I showed some of the materials to some colleagues and, big mistake, I let myself get talked out of it. It all made sense and felt worthy of investigation, but I let myself get talked out of it for several reasons. People don't like to change sometimes.

Anyhow, I began a cautious, year-long dialogue with Dr. Jutkowitz over the phone and by email. He made some pointers, and every thing that he pointed out to me over those months made sense. When I would try it out on patients (we call them practice members here), it would produce results.

It was a fateful time one August. I had taken a two-week vacation, and when I came back, I was more tired than when I left. I will never forget this, it was shortly before my office hours were to start, and I called Dr. Jutkowitz and said, "I'm finally ready to experience what you are doing. Is there anyone in Central New York or Pennsylvania that does ABC™ ?"

He said "No. Why don't you come down here and meet me. Let's do it". So, I arranged to meet him in Connecticut . I really thought I would just stay and visit him for an hour or

meet him in Connecticut. I really thought I would just stay and visit him for an hour or two and then go off to visit friends.

Well, that short trip turned into a four-day stay at his home. What he did and what he showed me on my own body and those of others that we looked at together that weekend amazed me. I couldn't argue with anything he was saying because it was all being demonstrated to me on my own body. After a lifetime of yoga and breathing exercises and amazing experiences at different healing events over the previous 15 years, by the end of that four-day visit, I was breathing and moving in ways that I hadn't done before. I was very excited to say the least. It was like being released from a straight jacket.

I remember on my drive home (this was before I had a cell phone) I stopped twice to use a pay phone to call colleagues to tell them what I had experienced. I remember spending 45 minutes standing up outside a gas station talking to a friend saying, "You are not going to believe what I just found".

The neat thing was, Dr. Jutkowitz taught me a lot in those four days, but he said, "Don't get too excited, Pierre. I don't want you to believe a word I am saying. I want you to go home, try it on a few people, and then tell me what you find".

I don't know if you can realize how empowering that statement was, but most developers will not tell you that. They will tell you that their way is the right way and the only way. Part of Jesse's brilliance is that he is a keen observer. He wasn't afraid to be directed by the scientific method to conclusions that were completely opposite of what he had previously believed or what conventional wisdom or first impression would tell you. He and his colleagues and students kept investigating and developing this work, which has been in its current form since 1989.

He told me "Don't believe a word I am telling you. You go up and try it at your office and see what you find." The rest is history.

I: Share with me some of your findings and how your practice members reacted to this technique.

P: Well, I thought I would slowly introduce it to the people I was seeing. I was seeing 180 people a week at that point, and here I was learning this whole new thing. My own body was still broken down, so the physical demands on me as the doctor were not easy to deal with. Believe me, I know what unwinding is! But every person I tried this on had results 3 or 4 times greater than with what I was doing previously, so I just could not hold back. I basically did the insane thing of changing the whole practice over. I didn't take on any new patients because I could barely handle the people that I already had. I did the best I could to educate them, the best I could to fix them.

My body was still in major collapse mode, and I had no reliable ABC&trade care for myself for the first few months. It was totally insanity because, as you know, this work takes a fair amount of physical effort on the part of the practitioner, and I was still

climbing out of a mechanical break down state.

So, to fast forward, I have confirmed the claims that Dr. Jutkowitz was making. All those claims which, in all honesty, completely put me off at first. This is why it was over a year before I finally dipped my toe into it, because, "how can someone make these outlandish claims? How can you say that you can fix almost anything in the body if it isn't cancer, fracture or infection? That is ridiculous. That can't be right."

Actually, it turns out that it *is* true that the body can physically recover from almost any trauma that has happened to it, and the body can physically unwind or uncoil through all the things that have gotten into its current shape.

I won't get into the details here, but getting the body's mechanics handled, like ABC™ does, coupled with what I know about spinal energy and the emotional aspects of the spine, has been, beyond a doubt, the revelation of my lifetime, the most amazing thing of my lifetime. With what we are doing now, we get to see miracles on a regular basis.

I: Share with me some of your favorite success stories of your practice members.

P: The funny thing about telling you success stories, it is supposedly unethical under the Chiropractic State Board regulations for me to even use testimonials or talk about testimonials, and yet these clinical outcomes are commonplace in ABC™ offices. There are dozens of testimonials on our office website, and they are but a sample. I am not taking credit for these stories; they are the result of people's own innate healing capabilities. It is just that we know how to help the body and nervous system work better, and amazing changes occur from that.

We live in this crazy society where I am not allowed to share the successes that regularly happen in the office, and yet the television is filled with commercials with supposedly depressed people taking pills and smiling and dancing through fields of amber grain. They are using models and *actors* to tell these stories that don't happen. People's lives do not change from taking medications, at least not to the degree we are talking about. The structure of their bodies does not change by ingesting chemicals. So, there is irony.

For example, we have numerous stories of people that had been living with debilitating migraines for years, who are now migraine free. I can hardly imagine how these folks survived. If I had one headache like they had, that would freak me out.

Within a week or two weeks, their headaches are gone and don't come back. We get to the cause. I love the look on their faces. They grab me by the shoulders and say, "Do you understand, I haven't had a headache since last Wednesday!" I say "Great, I am very sorry you had to put up with that all those years." The headache stories and the kids' stories, and the personality changes in the kids as their spines get fixed up and untwisted. One boy brought his teacher flowers the day after his first adjustment!

We recently had a woman who has been virtually disabled with pain for *27 years* who is astonished at how good she feels after 6 visits. She no longer needs to use the motorized carts at Wegman's and such.

It's not that they just straighten up mechanically; it is so much more than that. You see it in their faces and their eyes, the change in their beings. A whole host of people whose lives had been completely dominated by pain and misery. People should not put up with this. I just won't tolerate it.

The technology is there to fix these problems. It is as unnecessary for people to walk around in pain and dysfunction and low energy as it is for people to walk around with their teeth all rotten. How to save teeth and how to fix them if they have gotten decayed has already been figured out, and everyone knows about it. As outlandish as it may seem, how to fix spines has been figured out also. The word just hasn't gotten out yet.

My passion in life is two-fold: one is introducing individuals to this work and watching their response as they go from understandable skepticism (and sometimes hostile skepticism), to the realization of "Hey, my body is unwinding. My spine is changing. My nerves are getting stronger. I *do* feel better!" I love that.

Number two is, I am doing everything that I know to get this work out to the world. I spend one to two hours a week talking to other doctors that have heard about what ABC™ and asking about my experiences with it. Those are my passions.

I: Tell me how ABC has changed your mental and physical body.

P: Again, the best part of my job is getting people to move from skepticism or hostility or despair, all of these things people show up in the office with, to not just an intellectual understanding, which is relatively easy to do with the materials that we have, but for them to really *get it* that their bodies can heal.

These people have been at war with their bodies. Some have actually been waging war on their bodies with pharmaceuticals and surgeries and things like that. The dominant cultural story is that our bodies are designed to break down. I *love* reversing that story so people can feel what health is again. Not theoretically, but actually feel it. That's why I had to feel it in my own body, even though Dr. Jutkowitz's material made sense.

I think some of the photos and benefits I've received from my own spinal correction are listed on our website. One thing, going from age 47 to 49, I gained a 1/2 inch in height, and that's after having done almost thirty years of yoga prior to that. My posture has changed tremendously, my body has never, ever, in my adult life felt or performed like this. I am experiencing my second childhood. I am rollerblading and swimming so much better. Looking forward to picking up downhill skiing again, which I had to give up because I couldn't turn one way very well.

One of the more amazing things that happened to me (and to others) is that I don't get cold anymore. I used to be cold all winter. It is a blast when I go out now and I am outside and I get into my car, and I driving to work and I see "Oh my gosh, it is 50 degrees" I'm here in just a shirt. I normally would wear sweaters all winter long, just uncomfortable with cold. There is no longer the spinal cord tension that was bringing about an alarm state. I am no longer in a semi-fight or flight state all the time.

I have much more energy. My digestion is better. I don't have to take naps anymore. The last few months, I have been doing some weight training, and it just feels fantastic. I get to enjoy it like other normal people do. I keep making these gains which I have been trying to make for 20 to 30 years, but it never happened. Everything is now working so much better. And that process of getting healthier starts accelerating, because the more things line up, the stronger you get. You cycle upwards instead of spiraling downwards.

I: If these results happen all the time, explain to us why more people don't know about this?

P: That's a great question and there are many, many parts to it. That whole subject has occupied a large place in my thoughts for the last few years. There are many reasons. I am not a big proponent of the whole conspiracy theory that people are actively trying to suppress this, but it is certainly true that it is hard for many of us to change our way of looking at things, even in the face of objective data. People often will shut their eyes to it.

In the office, there is a great quote by Tolstoy that describes this difficulty in getting people to change their minds and face new facts. It is an interesting question. I am happy that I have helped turn 15 to 20 doctors onto ABC&trade, so in addition to the several hundred people we have helped here, we have helped thousands of people through the work of other doctors.

Dr. Jutkowitz spent much time trying to get through to the academic world to look at his work. You look at the clinical results and you can see the change and you can measure the change. Any one can see the changes with the naked eye. Sadly, there are a number of supposedly intelligent doctors who are actually willing to spend large chunks of their time arguing that none of these things can actually happen.

Years ago, I naively thought I could go up to Cornell and discuss clinical outcomes with people that are teaching on the subject, but it just isn't likely to happen that way. This work will spread by word of mouth. It is going to happen from the grass roots up. It's going to happen from one person with headaches telling the other person with headaches and eventually talking to the support group for headaches to eventually getting enough doctors hearing it not once or twice, but maybe six or ten or maybe three dozen times and saying "Hey, maybe there is something here."

This process will probably take many, many years but I am actually comfortable with the pace of it right now. I also hope in the future to hire another doctor who will be

responsible for publishing case studies in research journals.

I: Tell me about the kids that come through your office. It seems to me that parents would be very interested in knowing about the children that come to your office and receive this work.

P: Well, all of us that work here love kids, that's number one. Number two, after I had been doing this for awhile, I saw that, "Yes, it is possible to fix people up when they're in their 30's, 40's, 60's and even 70's." Yet, I knew that these structural problems had started years and decades before. Many of them when these people were less than 12 years old. So, I decided that I would much prefer putting my hands on working with them when they are 12, not just because it is easier to fix when they are 12, but because they get to enjoy the rest of their life so much more.

What really drives me is that, for whatever reason, I had to go through what I went through, and had to live twisted up, and in pain and dysfunction for many years.

If someone had checked me out with ABC™ when I was 15 years old, I could have saved myself 30 years of literally being screwed up. I wish I had felt this good back then. I can run a 100-yard dash faster now than when I was 18 years old. My mind works so much more clearly. What would my life have been like if I had been adjusted and checked with ABC&trade early on, that's what motivates me.

The spine is easier to fix at an early age, and why waste all that time being screwed up and wait until your body starts breaking down in your 40's and 50's. If we *have* to start with you then, great, bring it on, but let's get the young people in and get them checked.

What happens when we check children is one of three things:

- they check out fine and need nothing.
- they need a little correction, and a few adjustments fixes them up.
- they have to go through the whole adult program, but then they are done, and they get to enjoy their lives without the distortions.

I: Why do chiropractic and chiropractors have such a black eye?

P: Chiropractic started in 1895. There were many brilliant doctors over the years, and many different routes taken in the development of chiropractic analysis and techniques. All of them work somewhat at least some of the time. But if you take 100 people in America that have gone to chiropractors and you ask them, "What was your experience?" you will hear one of three answers:

- "It was great, the guy saved my life."

- It was great, the guy saved my life.
- "Hmmm" I couldn't really tell if it was helping that much."
- "The guy almost killed me; I'd never go back."

I understand all that. There have been dozens of chiropractors coming and going here in Tompkins County in the 14 years I've been here. Many things have been done in chiropractic that just shifts tension and pressures from one place to another. If you follow ABC&trade through, and let people unwind through all their compensations, they can get back to their original state, which is ease.

That is the biggest thing. Chiropractic has been hit or miss. Imagine that you had the best beer, and you were the manufacturer of the best beer in the world, but one out of every six-packs that left your factory was filled with horse urine. Your company would go down the tubes, because no one would really know if they were getting the best beer in the world or horse urine when they bought their six-pack.

I believe it has been the same type of thing with chiropractic, but it doesn't have to be that way any more. There have been very few practice members we haven't been able to help.

I: What steps would I take if I was interested in learning more or even receiving this ABC technique?

P: Anyone can visit our office website which links to the national ABC™ website.

In our office, the first step would be to call and schedule an appointment. We have a fun and in-depth history form and a symptom chart where you write down everything that you feel and how it affects your life and the severity of it.

I spend a lot of time talking with you the first visit. We start the exam process by taking two computerized spinal scans that give us a color print out of your spinal muscles and how hard they are working. We look at spinal nerve tension via thermography. Then we do a fun, 20-minute exam. We talk to you along the way, ask questions, and make sure you know what we are doing. We get you to notice what your body is doing. We get you to see if it differs from what it should be doing. On day one, if it is found that you need to get adjusted, we (with your permission). adjust you and see what has changed, and if you have noticed what has changed.

I: And, do things change?

P: Again, this is going to sound outlandish. I am sure that four years ago, it would have sounded outlandish to me, but I would say over 75% of the people walk out of their first appointment quite blown away about how good feel. For many of them, they haven't felt that way in many, many years. It is because their bodies have suddenly become upright and their spinal cord isn't being pulled so much. They can breathe better and the lever system of their skeleton is working better mechanically. That is basically the start of it

system of their skeleton is working better mechanically. That is basically the start of it.

I work with all kinds of people. We had a 100-year-old woman come in here a few months ago, just to give an example. Her late husband was a Cornell faculty member. She came in so sweet, sharp as a tack, and when we were done with her, she gave me a big kiss and she said "I want to apologize because I was up all last night worrying about this appointment and all the terrible things you were going to do to me. This was wonderful."

We do have difficult cases and we have to scratch our head for a while, but we try to be humble here. We try to be conservative in our prognosis, but really, it is amazing what starts to happen when the body is allowed to work the way it has been trying to work.

I: The last question I need to ask you is, what is up with your staff? Every time I have come in here, they are laughing and joking and making the people laugh harder than they were when they came in. There is a welcome feeling. How did you get that to happen?

P: I am blessed with an absolutely fantastic staff and I thank my lucky stars that they came on board. It is a funny story about people laughing in the office because when I meet with new people, some of them are miserable, and they often ask me, "What is going on here? What is going on with the laughter?" I say, "You know what? A lot of these people when they started were not laughing and were just like you are now". We don't only attract happy people. We take everyone and make them laugh again.

The staff is fantastic. They love their jobs. I think all of us feel really blessed to be here doing this work and helping people the way we are. People enjoy it and we enjoy them.

I: Well, I certainly look forward to my ABC adjustment by you, Dr. Pierre. Thank you for your time.