

Are you ready to reorganise your life?

Let your spine show you the way

By Lucy French

According to US-based Dr Donny Epstein, our physiology says a great deal about the structure of our lives. Asking “why is this pain or symptom happening to me?” invokes a higher level of thought and stimulates further investigation behind the real purpose of the illness or symptom. Research by the University of California indicates that as the structure of the spine improves so do people’s lives.

Have you ever thought you are living in your own *Groundhog Day* movie? Where life repeats the same old series of events until one day you wake up, smell the roses, see things differently and create a new ending? Well, that’s what happened to me, but it wasn’t in the way I expected! My life-defining moment began 6 years ago, when a friend introduced me to Network (also known as Network Spinal Analysis), a revolutionary methodology developed by Dr Epstein.

A graduate of the New York Chiropractic College, Dr Donny Epstein is the author of *The 12 Stages of Healing* and *Healing Myths, Healing Magic*, and a member of the science board of the distinguished Angelicum Council, based in Milan, Italy, which is a think-tank for world visionaries and academics. His advocates include peak performance coach and author, Anthony Robbins; Candace B Pert, PhD, author of *Molecules of Emotion*; and Deepak Chopra MD.

My journey of transformation started when I met my Network practitioner. I explained how a disc in my lower spine, which I’d injured over 15 years ago, was still causing me pain from time to time. What I wanted was someone to fix it so the pain would never come back.

The purpose of pain

To my astonishment he didn’t see my pain as the problem – or something to be ‘fixed’. Pain, he explained, isn’t normally an isolated incident but is connected to other life circumstances. Fixing the pain and restoring the person to the way they were before may feel like a safe option, but if nothing else changes in the person’s life the pain is more likely to return again and again.

‘What if the pain or symptom has a good purpose? What if it is asking you to *stop*, take an inventory of your life, and look at what needs to be done differently to achieve the life you really want?’

How do I know what needs to be done differently? ‘We need to put the pieces of your life back together so we can see the bigger picture. Like a jigsaw, we can see how the pieces connect and learn how the circumstances have affected your overall level of wellness.’

To put those pieces together I was asked a series of thought-provoking questions:

What was happening in my life when I originally injured the disc in 1985? That was easy – my marriage was on the rocks and my stress levels had gone sky high.

How was my injury treated and did I take any time out to reflect on the bigger picture? Rest was the recommended cure at the

‘Whether it is a chiropractic adjustment, a massage, acupuncture, or another natural healing approach, in restorative healing the practitioner learns to ask – how can i fix this, make the person more comfortable, eliminate the symptom, stop this thing that is disdtrubing them and restore them to the path and life they had before?’

By stopping the symptom the practitioner allows the person to resume their previous routines, behaviours and way of life. Nothing changes. Long lasting wellness required a re-organisational approach.’ Dr Donny Epstein.

time and, yes, I spent a lot of time thinking about what had gone wrong with my life. The previous 5 years had been especially difficult. I was exhausted from trying to save a failing marriage and coping with a very difficult family issue that wouldn't go away.

What did I do next? I decided to stop rescuing my marriage and taking on the rest of my family's problems. Once I recovered I left to travel overseas. Although it was a hard decision at the time, it gave me a whole new lease on life.

So why had the pain returned? What was happening in my life right now? I explained how the previous year had not been kind to me. First I'd lost my job, along with thousands of other Ansett Air New Zealand employees, and although I'd landed a new one within months it involved relocating to Queensland. Six months later, just as I was getting my life back, I found myself in hospital having an emergency hysterectomy. I didn't like the job, so I returned to Melbourne to be close to the rest of my family while I recuperated. This time going overseas wasn't going to be the answer. What I needed was a way to reorganise my whole life!

Do you want to restore or reorganise your life?

According to Dr Epstein the structure of our physiology says a great deal about the structure of our lives. If the shoulders are hunched forward, the physiology is placed in defence, the life force is drained from the body and the person feels inadequate and helpless. Unfortunately, if the physiology of the person's body doesn't change, neither will the structure of their life. Pain can become a positive and motivating force for that structure to change, but it depends on which direction the person wants to take. Do they want to restore or reorganise their life?

In restorative healing the person tends to want to go back to where they were before. Something has disturbed the status quo – I've lost my job, my partner has left me, I have this symptom – please stop it so I can go back to the way it was before all this happened! Although the desire to return to the way it was before is admirable (because it creates certainty and familiarity for the person), there is a high risk that the symptoms will return again and again.

Asking "why is this happening to me?" empowers the person. It invokes a higher level of thought and stimulates further investigation behind the real purpose of the illness or symptom. Known as Reorganisational Healing this approach gives the person the opportunity to actively participate in their wellness process and choose which direction they want to go in.

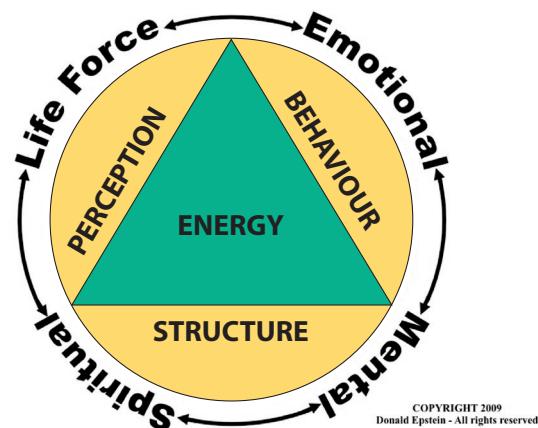
Triad of change

As the structure of the spine changes for the better, so do people's lives.

Research by the University of California – Irvine shows that when people use Network care they experience greater energy, improved flexibility, reduced symptoms and pain, greater capacity to cope with stress, improved mental clarity and performance, higher productivity, greater ability to adapt to change, increased self-confidence and satisfaction with work and life.

According to my Network practitioner it's common for people who have experienced Network to express themselves more

EPSTEIN TRIAD OF CHANGE



easily and sense their own needs. Over time, he's seen them enrol on new courses, change their vocation, even discover latent talents. New relationships develop and existing ones reach new levels of depth. The possibilities are endless!

What starts with the question "why is this happening to me" may end up with you enjoying a new quality of life, but it is a gradual process.

It involves working on the *structure* of the spine and releasing tensions, both past and present, so the body can learn how to move more freely. While this happens, the brain begins to perceive the world more clearly. As *perception* expands, the person becomes aware of new choices and this promotes life-enhancing *behaviours*. It's the combination of all three elements that dynamically shifts the person into a higher gear. Dr Epstein refers to this as the *triad of change*.

Feel the rhythm in your spine

The reorganisational approach starts from your very first visit. You are no longer regarded as a patient but as a practice member or client and Network practitioners will tend to 'entrain' a number of people in the same room, at the same time (although you can choose to have a room to yourself, if you ask beforehand).

A study conducted by senior researchers at the University of California – Irvine, assessed 2,800 people under Network Care in the US, Australia and Canada. The results showed that people experienced benefits such as greater energy, improved flexibility, reduced symptoms and pain, greater capacity to cope with stress, improved mental clarity and performance, higher productivity, greater ability to adapt to change, increased self confidence and satisfaction with work and life.

Source: *Journal of Vertebral Subluxation Research* (Blanks et al 1997).

As I waited my turn I was fascinated to watch my practitioner move from person to person using gentle and specific 'touches' on the spine with his fingers and hands. Everyone seemed to respond differently by moving and stretching their body, this way and that, in a wavelike motion. When it came to my turn I found myself quickly enjoying the experience, finding the rhythm in the wave both comforting and empowering.

According to Dr Epstein, these 'touches' connect with those points where the spinal cord attaches itself to the spine, and the person's body learns to release complex patterns of tension and areas of old defensiveness. As Network care continues a further unwinding of deeper tensions from the spine occurs.

What is evolutionary is that these 'touches' are applied in such a way as to engage the higher part of the brain, the frontal lobes of the cerebral cortex. This most recently developed part of the brain is the area through which we observe ourselves and make choices regarding our behaviour. By activating this area we are able to reach a higher level of thought and awareness about ourselves and the world we live in, and make new choices that enhance our way of life.

The spontaneous stretching and breath movements I observed are the result of two 'healing waves'. One is a breathing wave which releases tension through the spine and body and is deeply relaxing. The other is called the somatopsychic (or body-mind) wave™, which is associated with undulation or movement of the spine and a reorganisation of the person's spinal structure. These waves are unique to Network and help the system to reorganise itself.

Within weeks of my first session the old pain completely disappeared (and 6 years later it has never recurred). A strong sense of enthusiasm and motivation returned and life began to take on a new direction. I rented a fabulous home in a beautiful location, landed an excellent contract and gained a new sense of inner confidence.

Six years down the track my life still has its ups and downs, but these days I seem to manage stress with greater ease and bounce back more readily. Having released bucket loads of old emotional tension in my spine, I feel lighter and much happier in myself, and the best part is my life has continued to reorganise itself:

- How I perceive myself as a woman has changed for the better. Masculine suits and short hair have been replaced by long curly hair and a style of clothes that reflects a new sense of confidence in my feminine curves.
- After three redundancies I have changed the way I work and become a specialist in my field. As a result I find myself in higher demand, being offered jobs that enable me to follow my passion.
- There has been a dramatic improvement in my people skills and management style. I'm more productive and intuitive, with the ability to come up with innovative solutions to resolve age-old management problems.
- 'Reaching the top' of my career is no longer a high priority. I'm far more comfortable in my own skin, preferring to spend my time mentoring those around me and growing their skills.

- Instead of letting stressful situations get on top of me I've developed new strategies and resources to resolve them as they arise. I am more likely to ask myself "why is this happening to me?" or "what can I learn from this?" and use those answers to take decisive action.
- The old, traumatic relationship with my alcoholic mother has gone through a profound metamorphosis and now there is a real sense of inner peace between us.
- As my spine has become more flexible my posture has improved, my once-hunched and rounded shoulders have flattened out and this has naturally increased my height by 5 centimetres!

'Network Spinal Analysis (NSA) and Somato Respiratory Integration (SRI), Donny Epstein's revolutionary methodologies, are amongst the most powerful sources of personal transformation I have ever experienced or seen.

They produce embodied and empowered strategies that are both sustainable and enjoyable for enhanced human resourcefulness and wellness. I am stronger, more inspired, creative and healthy because of this work. It has personally and professionally helped me to maximize my ability to contribute to others.'

Anthony Robbins, Peak Performance Coach and best-selling author of Unlimited Power.

Increase your level of wellness

Network is now an integral part of my life and that includes participating in a group that practices Somato Respiratory Integration (SRI), an Epstein breath and body awareness methodology and experiencing Dr Epstein first-hand at some of his intensive programs. I have no doubt this has enabled me to achieve a greater level of wellness.

However, research by the University of California suggests that anyone can achieve similar results by simply adding Network to an existing health or fitness approach. Whether it's yoga, meditation, working out, being into sports or seeing a therapist, the study indicates that when Network is added to an existing health or fitness program the level of wellness significantly improves.

Locating a Network practitioner

To locate your nearest Network practitioner I recommend you visit www.wiseworldseminars.com and click on their international practitioner listing. The website also provides more articles on reorganisational healing as well as information on the latest Australian and overseas programs.

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