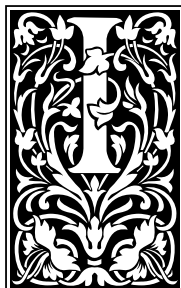


## Chapter Thirty-Two

### Spinal Manipulation and Adjustment

#### History



In many European countries “bonesetters” have, in a crude way, been treating strains and sprains of the spinal column since time immemorial. These bonesetters usually belong to the peasantry and the art has been transmitted in the same families from father to son for many generations.

Incidentally, these simple people observed that their treatment relieved not only sprained, tired and painful backs—the result primarily aimed at—but frequently exerted a favorable influence upon disease processes in remote organs and parts. This empirical discovery has gradually led to a wider application of this method of treatment.

The various modern systems of spinal manipulation, namely, osteopathy, chiropractic, naprapathy, neuropathy, spondylotherapy and our own neurotherapy, are all of distinctly American origin.

During the last quarter century millions of Americans through personal experience have become staunch adherents to one or more of these systems of treatment. This fact has been instrumental in directing the attention of numerous sincere and scientific investigators to the spinal column with its associated structures as a mechanism through which to apply therapeutic measures. It therefore behooves every health seeker to acquaint himself with the theories and claims of these various systems of manipulative treatment.

#### Osteopathy

The autobiography of Dr. A. T. Still contains the following interesting statement:

“In the year 1874 I proclaimed that a disturbed artery marked the beginning to an hour and a minute when disease began to sow its seeds of destruction in the human body. That in no case could it be done without a broken or suspended current of arterial blood, which by Nature was intended to supply and nourish all nerves, ligaments, muscles, skin, bones and the artery itself. . . . The rule of the artery must be absolute, universal and unobstructed or disease will be the result. I proclaimed then and there that all nerves depend wholly on the arterial system for their qualities such as sensation, nutrition and motion, even though by the law of reciprocity they furnish force, nutrition and motion to the artery itself.”

It may be argued that as early as 1805 the Ling System of Swedish Movement was founded on the same principle, namely, “permanent health through perfect circulation.” The evidence at hand, however, strongly suggests that the founder of osteopathy arrived at his conclusions independently.

The further claims of Dr. Still as to the cause and cure of disease are briefly as follows: Partial displacements of any of the various bones of the body exert pressure on neighboring **blood vessels**, thereby interfering with the circulation to the corresponding organs. These displacements, called “bony lesions,” are best “reduced” by manipulations called *osteopathic* “moves.”

### Chiropractic

In 1895, Dr. D. D. Palmer put forth the following claims as to the cause and cure of diseases: Sprains of the spine result in partial displacement of one or more of the vertebrae which go to make up the spinal column, thus exerting pressure on the neighboring **nerves**. This shuts off the vitality of the organs supplied by the affected nerves, hence disease results. These displacements, called “vertebral subluxations,” are best “adjusted” by means of manipulations in the form of chiropractic “thrusts.”

As soon as osteopathy and chiropractic were properly established, the more broad-minded exponents of both systems began mutual investigation and amalgamation. As a result, we find that only seven years after the birth of chiropractic, osteopathic literature began to mention vertebral subluxations as pressing on **nerves**, thereby causing disease. On the other hand, advanced chiropractors soon began to realize the importance of relaxing tense muscles prior

to delivering their thrusts. They also began to pay attention to the bony lesions other than those occurring in the spine. Many of the chiropractic principles and much of its technique of today has been gleaned from osteopathy, while the reverse statement holds equally true.

### Naprapathy

The “connective tissue doctrine of disease” was first proclaimed by Dr. Oakley Smith in 1907. It may be briefly stated as follows: A vertebra does not become misplaced without being fractured or completely dislocated. What is called a bony lesion by the osteopath and a subluxation by the chiropractor, is in reality a “ligatight,” that is, a shrunken condition of the connective tissue forming the various ligaments that bind the vertebrae together.

Ligatights are best “corrected” by means of naprapathic “directos.” These differ from chiropractic thrusts in that they aim not at adjusting subluxated vertebrae but at stretching definite strands of shrunken connective tissue. Ligatights occur not only in the spine but also in other parts of the body.

### Neuropathy

This system of manipulative treatment was originated in 1899 by Drs. John Arnold and Harry Walter of Philadelphia. Their claims may be briefly stated as follows: Morbid matter, poisons and irritants of various kinds, acting upon the vasomotor nerves which control the blood vessels, produce abnormal changes in circulation which, if perpetuated, finally lead to disease manifestations. The nerve impulses coming from diseased parts travel to the spinal cord and, like all other nerve impulses, are transmitted along those branches of the spinal nerves which supply the structures (muscles, blood vessels, etc.) along each side of the spine. Here these impulses bring about abnormal circulatory changes similar to those found in the diseased organs or parts.

Since nerve impulses are transmitted from diseased organs to the spine, it is evident that they can be made to travel also in the reverse direction. Neuropathic treatment, therefore, consists of manipulations and thermal applications which aim at correcting the abnormal circulatory changes as found in the spine, thereby correcting corresponding abnormal processes in the organs or parts

supplied by the nerves coming from that region of the spine.

These men also emphasized the fact that the circulation within the blood vessels, being propelled by the heart, needs less attention during disease than the circulation of the fluids in the spaces between the cells and through the lymph vessels and glands. Neuro-*opathy*, therefore, also lays great stress on applying manipulation and thermal applications to the lymphatic system.<sup>1</sup>

## Neurotherapy

While the exponents of the above systems of spinal manipulation differ widely in their theories as to the cause of disease and the means of removing such cause, their methods of treatment furnish considerable evidence of satisfactory results. This seems to suggest that there must be some real value in each system and that a great deal of the difference between these apparently opposed methods of treatment lies in the claims of their exponents. It will be shown presently that, in their final analysis, the osteopathic spinal lesion, the chiropractic subluxation and the naprapathic ligatight represent one and the same thing.

Natural Therapeutics is broad enough to embrace all methods of treatment, no matter what their source, provided they harmonize with the fundamental laws of cure.

Gradually, therefore, after having gathered the **constructive** elements from all the various methods of manipulation, after considerable spinal dissection and, above all, after close observation of the results obtained in hundreds of obstinate acute and chronic cases, we of the School of Natural Therapeutics have evolved our own system of spinal manipulation and have named it **neurotherapy**.

## The Relation of Neurotherapy to Other Manipulative Systems

Osteopathy, chiropractic, naprapathy, neurotherapy and spondylotherapy, as we have learned, are various systems of manipulative treatment which have been devised mainly to correct spinal and other bony lesions, shrinkage and contracture of muscles,

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<sup>1</sup> The lymphatic system is the bastard child of medicine. No one seems to want to acknowledge it and yet it may be the ultimate answer to many present-day medical mysteries.

ligaments and other connective tissues.

Important as these methods are in the treatment of acute and chronic diseases, by themselves they are not all-sufficient because they deal only with the mechanical causes of disease, not with the chemical, thermal or with the mental and psychical. The most efficient spinal treatment cannot make good for the **bad effects of an unbalanced diet** which contains an excessive amount of poison-producing materials and is deficient in the all-important mineral elements or organic salts. Just as surely as mental therapeutics and a natural diet cannot correct bony lesions produced by external violence, just so surely is it impossible to cure dementia praecox, monomania or obsession, or to supply iron, lime, sodium, etc., to the system by correcting spinal lesions.

The trouble with the manipulative schools and their graduates is that they adhere too closely to the mechanical theory and treatment of disease; that they reject practically all natural methods of treatment aside from manipulative and that so far as the osteopathic school is concerned its practitioners show a strong tendency to fall back upon the “Old School” methods of drugging and of surgical treatment.<sup>2</sup> This is due to the fact that in many types of diseases manipulative treatment by itself has proved insufficient to produce satisfactory results.

In order to do justice to our patients and not neglect our responsibilities toward them **we must use in the treatment of disease all that is good in all the natural methods of healing.** In serious chronic cases any single one of these methods, whether it be pure food diet, hydrotherapy, massage, spinal treatment, mental therapeutics or homeopathy, is not by itself sufficient to achieve satisfactory results or to produce them fast enough.

To use an illustration: Suppose a wagon full of freight requires the combined strength of six horses to move it and suppose that number of horses is available, would it not be foolish to try to move the load with one, two, three, four or even five horses? Would not common sense suggest the saving of time and effort by putting all six horses to work at once?

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<sup>2</sup> Today it is possible to attend some osteopathic schools and never be taught manipulation. It is interesting to see that the seeds of this change had beginnings in Dr. Lindlahr's time.

**In Natural Therapeutics every one of the various methods of treatment is supplemented and assisted by all the others.**

The manipulative schools of healing maintain that practically all disease is caused by mechanical abnormalities of the spinal column or of muscles, ligaments and other connective tissues, due to abnormal strain or injury. The philosophy of Natural Therapeutics, on the other hand, points out that a large percentage of such spinal and other mechanical lesions are secondary manifestations of disease, not primary causes; that acute or subacute inflammatory conditions in the interior of the body may cause nervous irritation and thereby contraction of muscles and ligaments and, as a result of these, subluxations of vertebrae or of other bony structures.

The naprapathic theory of disease postulates that it is the shrinkage and contraction of the connective tissues, which serve as a support and protection for the nerve matter contained in the nerve trunks and filaments, that cause interference with the normal nerve supply of cells and tissues and thereby abnormal function and disease.

**The philosophy of Natural Therapeutics points to the fact that this shrinkage and contraction of the connective tissues surrounding and permeating the nerve trunks and filaments is caused by certain acids and other pathogenic materials which are produced by faulty diet and defective elimination and that the same causes produce accumulation of waste and morbid matter in the tissues of the body which, all through the system, interfere just as effectually with nutrition, drainage and innervation of the cells and tissue as do spinal lesions and ligatights.**

While the other systems of manipulative treatment confine themselves almost entirely to the correction of bony and other connective tissue lesions, to "pressing the button," as it is called, neurotherapy, besides this, aims at other very important results.

In disease the tissues are either in an abnormally tense and contracted or in a weak, relaxed condition. The functional activities are either hyperactive as in acute inflammation, or sluggish and inactive as in chronic atonic and atrophic conditions. These extremes can be powerfully influenced and equalized by manipulative inhibition, relaxation or stimulation.

During an acute attack of gastritis, for instance, the neurotherapist would exert strong inhibition on the nerves which supply

the stomach. This is accomplished by deep and persistent pressure on the nerves where they emerge from the spinal openings (foramina). This diminishes the rush of blood and nerve currents to the inflamed organ and thereby eases but does not suppress the inflammatory process and the attending congestion and pain.

In case of extreme tension in any part of the system, relaxation of the shrunken tissues can be brought about by gentle but persistent stretching of the nerves and adjacent muscles and ligaments, in a manner similar to that of the naprapathic directos.

When the vital organs and their functions are weak and inactive or when nerves, muscles, ligaments and other connective tissues are in a relaxed, atonic or atrophic condition, certain stimulating movements applied to the nerves where they emerge from the spinal column will energize the vital functions all through the system.

Many patients imagine that such manipulative treatment is superficial. To them it is just “rubbing” and seems all alike. They do not realize that manipulative stimulation applied to the nerves near the surface of the body travels all along their branches and filaments like electricity along a complicated system of copper wires and thus reaches the innermost cells and organs of the body, making them more alive and active. This internal stimulation of vital activities is attained also by good massage through energizing the nerve endings all over the surface of the body.

### The Difference Between Neurathery and Other Manipulative Systems

The following paragraphs will explain the fundamental difference between neurotherapy and the older systems of manipulative treatment. The older systems, the same as the allopathic school of medicine, look upon acute diseases as destructive processes dangerous to health and life; therefore they endeavor to check or suppress them as quickly as possible by their various methods.

Neurotherapy so far is the only system of manipulative treatment that bases its work on the fundamental laws of Natural Therapeutics. According to these laws every acute disease is the result of a purifying, healing effort of Nature. Therefore neurotherapy would not suppress acute processes by manipulative treatment any more than by drugs, ice, antitoxins, surgery or any other suppressive method.

To illustrate: Supposing that spontaneously or as a result of natural living and treatment a patient suffering from chronic constipation, indigestion, etc., develops a vigorous purging, which we of the Nature Cure school would consider a splendid healing crisis. Under allopathic as well as under the treatment of other manipulative schools such an acute reaction would be immediately suppressed. This can be accomplished very easily by a few manipulative moves, but it would mean the suppression of a purifying healing crisis and this would result in throwing the patient back into his old chronic condition. The underlying causes of disease must be removed before we can cure chronic disease and bring about a normal condition of the organism.

Suppose manipulative treatment should succeed in stopping a fever instantaneously. This would suppress Nature's purifying, regenerating efforts, the patient would continue to "load up" more morbid materials (especially since these schools do not teach the importance of natural living) and it would only be a matter of time until the morbid accumulations in the body would excite new acute reactions, necessitating more adjustments. This may be all right for the practitioner; but what about the patient? In the long run it can only have one result, and that is chronic disease.<sup>3</sup>



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<sup>3</sup> Most of what Dr. Lindlahr describes is still accurate today. The osteopath has become a general practitioner, treating with mainly allopathic methods. The chiropractor has split into two camps, one that still holds that the adjustment will cure all ailments and another that has ventured into the natural healing field and treats much like the naturopath, who is the modern equivalent of the Nature Cure doctor. The other forms of manipulative therapy mentioned have long since moseyed off into the sunset.