

*Jan 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018*

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this endorsement in order to offer my support to the practitioners of the treatment method known as Counterstrain. I have found this method of treatment to help with not only increasing overall quality of life, but also helping ease effects of emotional trauma many of us in the veteran and first responder community carry.

### **A BRIEF BIT OF MY MEDICAL HISTORY**

Former military from the first gulf war, multiple injuries incurred from working in the normal conditions that combat vets face. Shoulder injuries, lower back, knees and foot pain. Injuries that most of us Veterans' as well as first responders face.

### **PHYSICAL RESPONSES TO COUNTER STRAIN TREATMENT**

In 1995 I suffered a career ending accident that cause me to be in a coma for several months and also resulted in 32 major skull fractures, a collapsed lung on my right side, broken back, dislocated shoulders, brain injury and paralysis. For the next two years I was run through the normal VA channels and treatments for my conditions.

Eventually I was able to return to almost complete function however, pain had become my constant companion.

On good days, I could eventually get my feet on the floor after trying to sit up for 20 mins. I have been "blessed" with a headache that sat as a solid "7" on the pain scale. (The headaches could hit a good solid 15 if I became over stressed.) My back would seize a few times a week. My feet would be in so much pain after standing or walking for an hour that I would be looking for my pain meds more then I should have been. Eventually I had to give up sleeping in any position that came close to lying down. The lack of sleep didn't bother me so much because the less you sleep the less you will dream...and sometimes the dreams are just too dark.

I tried every treatment I could find for pain management...yoga, meditation, and booze for a time. Eventually I just learned to deal with it. After a few years I just became tolerant of most of it. So tolerant of it that I went on to become a government contractor and worked overseas after 9/11 for several years.

A career choice that honestly only made past conditions and injuries worse. Not to mention added a multitude of new injuries including having my right side of my head and torso down past my right hip peppered with shrapnel. (Of both metallic and organic origins. Certain airports are fun to travel through now as you can imagine.)

In 2017, a series of events got me to the office of Willy Cherry, a "Counterstrain" practitioner. After a couple of treatment sessions for a non-related injury, Mr. Cherry asked me if he could try something new to help perhaps with my pain management.

When I was told about the counterstrain treatment method I, to be painfully honest, had ZERO faith in it. Sounded like hocus pocus. Not to mention I had seen and been treated by VA for years for pain management to no avail.

I cannot emphasize enough... I HAD NO FAITH IN THIS TREATMENT METHOD!!!! I have heard how the only treatments that would work were surgery to repair my back and perhaps chiropractic methods to help my headaches WITH EXTREME NECK MANIPULATION. (Let's not forget I spent some time paralyzed!! HELLO!!! YOU THINK I'M GONNA GO FOR THIS OPTION???)

The first thing that was focused on was my feet. To be honest I agreed to it because in my mind it was the thing if it this "new treatment" screwed up...it would have the least impact.

Using counterstrain Mr. Cherry cut the pain I was feeling in my feet and ankles by at least 80% during the first treatment. In follow up treatments the pain has subsided to such a degree I am surprised when I notice it... and then it normally goes away on its own.

Little by little, after gaining some trust in counterstrain therapy, we have progressed on to other areas of pain. Those areas have shown massive reductions in areas of pain.

As of this writing, I can say that I am amazed at the results I have had from this therapy. The highlights if you will:

1. I am able to sleep lying down...and get 5 or more hours of sleep a night about 80 % of the time.
2. Back pain is reduced to such a low level that I don't notice it most days. (I actually use the occasional line that I'm just sore cause I'm old vs I'm all busted up inside.)
3. Lower extremity pain has almost been totally eliminated.
4. On most days my headache pain registers about a "4".

## **EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO COUNTERSTRAIN THERAPY**

Those of us that make the choice to have high risk careers do so with a certain understanding in our heads. Part of it is that we will bear the weight of the things we do in order to keep those we care about safe. It's the idea of "I will do it so maybe someone else won't have to."

This ideal we have sometimes costs us far more than we would have expected. Flashbacks, bad dreams, nightmares, nights filled with demons...whatever you want to call it. If you're lucky, you won't remember having them, but you do have them.

I am no different. Like most of us I always choose to just deal with it on my own. Only fellow vets who had been down range could relate...and while there are a lot of us now, most of us still don't like to talk about it. We are under the misconception, if we talk about it, it makes us weak somehow.

In November of 2017 I was asked by Mr. Cherry to go meet some of the "pioneers" of counterstrain therapy in San Diego. The idea was to let me work with them and see what other things in my body we could unlock.

We discussed some of the physical limitations I was having and also discussed my nightmares and lack of sleep due to them.

After seeing the gains in the quality of my daily life I whole heartedly agreed to go.

This was the day I met a woman named Holly Christy. We discussed briefly my past and my guarded emotional state etc.

She told me there was a chance I would feel emotions all at once and maybe some bits and pieces of memory may come through. I honestly didn't expect anything. I did suffer brain trauma and had been told this all before by VA.

Then Holly did a scan on me (This is the hocus pocus part I mentioned earlier.)

She found some things and we went to work. Shortly thereafter as I lay there on the treatment table I remember thinking at that moment that I didn't feel anything...nothing had changed.

Then I sat up...

I was hit with images and emotions that I had buried or lost. The wave of all of it was exhausting and to be honest...emotionally brutal.

This one treatment opened a door in my head that has allowed a level of emotional clearing I can't even begin to put into words.

I wish I could share how different things are now. Don't misunderstand... the demons still come sometimes...but now there are not as many of them...now it's a fair fight.

Respectfully,

**T.S. "DOC"**

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