

## Women's Voices Article Jan 2003

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### What is Network?

Many people have asked me about what Network Spinal Analysis is and how it differs from other chiropractic.

One of the first things readers should know is that chiropractors and the art of chiropractic is as diverse as traditional medicine. Little did I know that when I began my journey to become a chiropractor that there are over 760 different types or techniques that chiropractors may choose to specialize in. Just like most lay people I had assumed that the chiropractor "cracked" (a word no chiropractor is comfortable with. The medical establishment likes the term spinal manipulation but still with the negative connotations most chiropractors prefer the term adjustment. ) in one way and I was going to school to learn how to do it.

Almost all chiropractors believe in the innate wisdom of the body to heal itself. The human body is born with an internal wisdom and mechanism of self healing that can not be reproduced in its natural form by science. This innate wisdom knows how to heal a cut on your finger without higher cortical function. Chiropractors believe that interference with the nervous system distorts the innate ability of the body to heal itself. Although each chiropractor may have different opinions about how to restore the nervous system function, all chiropractors are required to go to Chiropractic College which lasts on average four years and covers almost exactly the same information that medical students cover in medical school. (With undergraduate requirements most chiropractors spend a total of eight years in undergraduate and graduate school together) In addition to anatomy and physiology, chiropractors learn the skill of adjusting. Most chiropractors choose to specialize in a particular art, and philosophy that supports how they perceive patients can best evolve with their health.

Network Spinal Analysis (NSA) is one such field. NSA is a constantly evolving field developed by Donald Epstein. How is NSA unique? NSA differs from traditional chiropractic approaches in several key ways:

1. It is very **gentle**, with little "popping" or "cracking" of joints. As your spine regains its flexibility and suppleness, bones often

- “pop” into place on their own. NSA adjustments induce a powerful “relaxation response” which catalyzes internal healing and growth.
2. It is **interactive**. NSA chiropractors don't “fix” you or do something to you. Instead, you are an active participant in your own healing and growth. By helping you better attune to inner cues, we **empower you** to choose increasingly healthier choices and more appropriate responses to your life challenges.
  3. During successive Levels of Care, your body naturally develops a variety of **new strategies** which promote your brain's awareness and ability to self regulate stress. At every level of care, you determine what your goals are and whether you've accomplished them. Then clinically the doctor and practice member can determine together what the next step should be.

The following is an excerpt from the founder of Network Spinal Analysis Donald Epstein. When an event occurs that our brain determines is not safe for us to fully experience, the energy and information of the event is translated into vibration and tension, which is then stored in the body. Our body then walls off the offending energy and tension over time with muscular spasm, spinal distortion, reduced breathing in the area and reduced movement. We tense more easily and our physiology remains set on “defense” In defense, we tighten. Our blood pressure tends to rise, we feel less emotion, and we live in reaction to the stress of the moment. Nerves that attach through the spinal cord into the brain connect every cell of the body, and tension in this main cable network creates tension in the body tissues. The brain continues to perceive life defensively, and produces stress chemicals that inhibit the ability to pay attention to the incomplete “energy” or “unfinished business”. We react to environmental challenges as threats. Novel or new ideas are stressful, we have difficulty making change, and we fear things that are different. We are in survival mode in many areas of our life.

This is not only unhealthy, but is far from attractive to others around us. We have lost our connection to ourselves, our higher power, our inner resources, love, and sense of true beauty. Much of what many disciplines seek to correct through manipulation, massage, and therapy is often a symptom of this process. Until it is safe to experience that energy again, and our bodies develop the strategy to do this and digest the information from the trauma, we cannot really feel whole or well. The state of safety is one which promotes internal awareness and internal “growth”.

Through gentle contacts along the neck and lower spine (where the spinal cord attaches inside the vertebral column), called network adjustments or entrainments, greater body awareness is achieved. The body moves away from defense and towards growth, we are attentive to our inner cues, energy, and respiration, and we are no longer focused on the outer circumstance of the moment to dictate our health. Our spinal tension patterns, alignment, and posture reflect our movement between defense and growth. We experience a greater sense of grace, gratitude, connection, inner power, and love, all previously inaccessible to a brain that is functioning in defense. In time, this energetic, physical, emotional, and spiritual state becomes more familiar and sustainable. When a person can express her authenticity and self-confidence, she radiates beauty, strength, power, love, and hope.

Health is found by experiencing ourselves more fully. In this day and age where people are looking for out of body experiences my goal is to help people find connection to their lives through their body. Although there are many different tools to reach the same place Network Spinal Analysis is my way of doing this. Dr. Laura Polak, D.C.

Dr Laura Polak, D.C. is a Network Spinal Analysis practice at the Radiant Health Center in Sebastopol. She encourages readers to submit questions about their health and healing process for next months issue to [radiantbody@earthlink.net](mailto:radiantbody@earthlink.net). Or she can be contacted directly at 824-0340