

Success Factors

Create a Healthy Outcome with Wellness Images' Structural Bodywork Program

Bottom line. You want your therapy to work.

When pain interrupts the life you planned, you need help. But where do you turn?

Wouldn't you like to know ahead of time if the treatment you're considering was going to work? That's what most people I talk with worry about. Over and over they tell me, "I wouldn't mind investing the time or the money if I knew it was really going to work. But how do I know?"

I won't try to minimize the challenges these people face. With so many options available, it really is hard to know what to do. Think of all the choices we can make: pills, shots, surgery, physical therapy, chiropractic, massage therapy, acupuncture, TENS units, warm-water therapy, magnets, yoga, exercise, inversion devices, nutritional supplements, and the list goes on.

So what do you do? You ask your doctor, ask your friends, ask your mom, read the stuff that comes in the mail, open the Yellow Pages, and search the Internet. Everybody's got an opinion. Jane went here and it worked. Frank went there and it didn't. Wouldn't it be great if you could just take somebody's (anybody's) advice and be done with it?

But it's more complicated than that. There are all sorts of factors to consider. Jane may have had great results going to yoga class, but you aren't Jane. You don't have the same symptoms, the same precipitating factors, or the same personality.

You aren't Frank either. Maybe he didn't hit it off with the therapist. Perhaps Frank was preoccupied with a problem at work and couldn't give the session his full attention. And even the best of therapists occasionally has an "off" day.

Now here's the kicker. Your choice of treatment strategy may not even be the biggest factor for a successful outcome.

Practically speaking, some people will get better no matter which therapy they choose. Others are going to be "swimming upstream" under even the best of circumstances.

Fortunately, there's some very good news to be found in all this.

Guess what?

One source looking at the therapeutic process itself attributes outcome like this:

1. **Client factors (what the client brings to the therapy setting) - 40%.**
2. **Relationship factors (between the client and the therapist) - 30%.**
3. **Hope and expectancy of the client - 15%.**
4. **Therapeutic model or technique - 15%.**

(Hubble, Duncan, and Miller (1999). The Heart & Soul of Change: What Works in Therapy. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Though the authors are psychotherapists, the text refers to "any behavioral change enterprise.")

You, the participant, have a lot of influence over the outcome of your healing process.

That's what this short report is all about. By investing just 10 or 15 minutes more of your time you will learn:

- 5 personality factors that create successful therapeutic outcomes
- 11 lifestyle factors you can impact to make your healing process more effective
- 3 therapeutic goals that structural bodywork serves well
- Resources for learning more about Wellness Images' program strategy
- How to assess your potential for success with our program

If you're a good candidate for our program, we hope you'll give us the opportunity to help you. But even if you're not, we hope that you'll have learned enough to make any healing endeavor you may undertake more successful.

Says who?

Before we get to the details, I'd like to address your concern about my qualifications to present this information. My background includes a combination of education and experience that places me in a unique position to address the very factors we're dealing with here.

- First, I am a Developmental Psychologist. Developmental psychologists study how people get to be the way they are. Though some specialize in issues of a particular age group (children or seniors, for example), the field of Developmental Psychology covers the entire lifespan. We consider physical, mental, and emotional factors. I earned a Master's degree in this field from Wayne State University in Detroit.
- Second, I am a Neuromuscular Therapist. Neuromuscular therapy addresses soft tissue pain and related problems. We normalize body posture using manual therapy techniques. I've practiced neuromuscular therapy privately in Detroit, MI and Minot, ND. I've spent ten years on the teaching staff for St. John Seminars, a leading provider of neuromuscular therapy training. In 1999-2000, I participated in a clinical research study (sponsored by Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit) on the effectiveness of neuromuscular therapy for headaches.
- Third, I have an extensive knowledge base in the field of Energy Medicine. Energy Medicine considers the relationship between how a person handles their life-force energy and their health. Life-force energy is the stuff that makes people say things like "I feel drained" or "I feel like I could do anything today!" I earned a doctorate degree (PhD) in this field under a program developed by Dr. Norman Shealy. Dr. Shealy was the mentor of Caroline Myss, arguably the most well-known personality in this field at the moment.

Section One — 5 Personality Factors that Support Positive Change

When we're faced with a health challenge, most of us want to get results as quickly as possible. More than that, we want results that will last.

With effectiveness in mind, the first important thing to consider is how you got into the situation you're currently trying to change. You got this way somehow. Everything you've thought, said, and done so far in your life has brought you to exactly the moment you're experiencing right now.

Much of your experience has been influenced by habits. Habits you may not be consciously aware of. If you're dealing with ineffective habits you do recognize, chances are you don't have very good tools for changing them (or you would have done it already). Most of our therapeutic goals involve restructuring patterns that have developed over 20, 30, even 50 or 60 years. Creating lasting change means learning new habits. Along the way, you'll develop a new, healthier sense of "normal."

Let's look at five major success factors that make the changes you desire easier to come by. As you read this section, consider your own personality. If you're strong in these characteristics, experience shows that your program will progress better. Even if you're not strong in them by nature, awareness of their value in the situation coupled with your willingness will go a long way.

Success factor #1: Receptivity. In order for any therapy to work, you must be receptive to being helped. Unless you're willing to be healthy, your body simply won't respond. Most people who would take the time to read a summary like this will have at least a passive willingness to get well. But that's not enough.

Ask yourself how much you want to be well. Be honest. If you really want to get well — even if it might mean finding a different line of work, giving up your disability benefits, or letting your spouse be right (just this once), then you're on the right track.

On the other hand, if you're reading this because your wife, friend, or health practitioner thinks our program sounds great, but it doesn't feel right to you, then things may not go very well. Likewise, if you want to improve just enough to mow the lawn or play with the kids, but not quite enough to go back to work or give up your lawsuit against the guy that rear-ended you, then you'd be well advised to revisit your priorities before seeking treatment.

Consistently, people who do the best have not only willingness, but a *compelling reason to be well*. You don't have to have that compelling reason today, though. Receptivity is enough. With that, we can help you find the reason.

Success factor #2: Personal responsibility. As I said earlier, you got this way somehow. That "somehow" has to do with old habits and old choices. You'll need to be willing to make different choices if you want to get better. Sometimes, those choices will be made based upon what you know is going to create health—even when you really don't feel like it.

You'll be assuming responsibility for your own health. It is your responsibility, right? Who

has to live with the consequences if your health fails? You, right? Not the guy in the suit at the insurance company. Not your doctor. You.

You may need to make some lifestyle choices that you haven't been used to in the past. A prospective client once said to me, "If I'm going to be able to afford therapy at your clinic, I'll have to quit smoking." That's an example of the sort of thing we're talking about.

It helps to think of taking care of your body the same way you think about taking care of anything else you own. Your car needs oil changes and new tires; your house needs paint and a new roof; even your clothes need updating occasionally. When you accept responsibility for your health, your program will work better.

Success factor #3: Curiosity. It's helpful to stay curious as we get to work. You are the expert at your own life. The rest of us are consultants that you bring in to help you solve a problem. So you get to ask some pretty cool questions of yourself. You get to dig for the real answers:

- What would it feel like if I did *this* for a change instead of *that*?
- What would happen if I *didn't* clench my teeth when I hear the boss coming?
- I wonder why my back hurts the most when I'm driving to work.
- I wonder what I might do differently so the same thing doesn't happen tomorrow.

Curiosity may have killed the cat, but it's very helpful in a healing process.

Success factor #4: Flexibility. A healing process can really be fun. You get the opportunity to consider all kinds of different ways to look at parts of your life. Reinvent yourself in a new image. With a great reason, no less! Who can argue that good health deserves your attention?

You might end up changing food habits, movement habits, how you hold the phone, how you get up out of a chair, or how you think about your mother-in-law. You might get to develop a new job, get more sleep, or take an afternoon for yourself once a week. Maybe even make some new friends.

Look at it this way. Everything in your life that you've done so far has brought you to exactly the point where you are today. If there are things about today that you don't like (and I suspect there are, or you wouldn't be reading this), then you need to be prepared to create a different future.

If change means getting rid of pain and illness, then change can be very, very good.

Success factor #5: Persistence. Jan (not her real name) was in her late 30's when she first arrived at my office. A wife, mother, and registered nurse, she had a life-long headache problem. Though I didn't know it at the time, she also had what I consider the most consistent predictor of success under any therapeutic model—*a compelling reason to be well*.

We set out to get rid of her headaches. As a nurse, she had exhausted all the conventional

approaches for dealing with her problem. Yet something had her keep looking. When Jan arrived, she had a constant daily headache which spiked into a migraine several times a week. Physically, she was in rough shape.

After her first four appointments, Jan saw no real improvement. But at the fifth session, her migraine spikes stopped. Jan was thrilled! It took four more sessions before we resolved her daily headache. But we did resolve them at session #9. I say “resolved” because in the two years that I knew Jan afterward she never had a relapse. Yes, she’d have an occasional mild headache, but it responded to aspirin or Tylenol. “Just like anybody else,” she said.

I thought our results were nothing short of miraculous. To me, resolving a long-standing problem like Jan’s within a couple of months seemed faster than I could have imagined. But what if Jan had given up after four sessions of “no apparent results?” She’d probably still have the headaches today.

Some problems resolve quickly. But other times, it can take a couple of months just to get a person settled down enough to start making progress. Therapy is by definition a process. The body has its own schedule. It responds when it’s ready. Persistence pays.

Section Two — Lifestyle factors that affect therapeutic results* *

I practice a holistic philosophy. An imbalance in any part of your life could be intimately related to an imbalance in any other part of your life. The way you do anything is very often the way you do everything. These factors can directly impact the effectiveness of your therapy program:

1. **Life satisfaction.** Are you absolutely delighted with your life? Do you contribute to your community, wake up excited about the day’s activities, and look forward to a great tomorrow? *Do you have a compelling reason to be well?* If not, would you consider taking on the project of adding meaning to your life? A life of drudgery and resignation is the surest way I know of to sabotage any attempt to create health.
2. **Smoking.** Are you a smoker? Smoking reduces circulation. Soft tissue therapies rely on circulation for their effectiveness. If you are a smoker, count on a longer therapy process than a non-smoker with the same history. (You could quit and speed thing up.)
3. **Over-stressed nervous system.** Do you consume lots of caffeine, sugar, or other nervous system stimulants? Are you a “Type A” in a high-stress job? Soft tissue therapy involves calming the nervous system. Many other therapy options share this same goal. If your lifestyle stresses the nervous system, your process will be slower. (Ironic, isn’t it? Less caffeine means faster results. You could always cut back.)
4. **Food choices and exercise.** Is your weight proportional to your height? Do you exercise regularly (at least 3 times a week), including aerobic fitness, strength training, and flexibility in your program? Does your eating plan feature whole, unprocessed foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean protein while minimizing processed foods, sugars, fried foods, and animal products? Do you drink plenty of fresh, pure water? Would you consider taking on the project of upgrading your food and exercise plan?
5. **Allergies and sensitivities.** Have you ruled out allergies and environmental toxins?

Common sensitivities that are often overlooked include wheat, sugar, dairy, corn, electromagnetic pollution, diesel fuel, pesticides, food additives, molds, Candida overgrowth, dental filling materials, old root canals, perfumes, and dyes. If your situation warrants it and you haven't ruled these out, would you be willing to?

6. **Movement problems / ergonomics.** Are you dealing with any uncorrected physical distortions such as unequal leg length, collapsed arches, or poor bite? Do you wear bifocals or trifocals? How are the ergonomics of your work station? Do you hold the phone on your shoulder with your ear? Carry a fat wallet in your back pocket? Are you a musician, dental professional, or a hairdresser? Do you run a cash register, scanner, or assembly line position? Do you engage in sports that stress your body? Are you willing to explore solutions to replace or compensate for the movement challenges we've just described?

7. **Unresolved trauma.** Have you had any serious injuries, accidents, or surgeries in the past? Was your own birth process complicated? (If you don't remember this yourself, ask someone if possible.) Recalling the circumstances involved can sometimes help us re-create the process through which your distortion pattern was created. This can be very helpful in resolving it. Another consideration is the possibility that old injuries or surgeries may have healed in a way that limits the amount of structural change possible.

8. **Outcome-oriented process.** In a goal-oriented process, your program is focused on creating results. People outside a therapeutic process might enjoy similar activities for the pleasure of the experience. For example, a person might join an exercise class to get in shape or because they enjoy the exhilaration of movement. A person might get a massage because they enjoy the relaxing sensations or see a body therapist for pain relief. Ultimately, health and enjoyment can co-exist. Yet in a therapeutic process, sometimes short-term discomfort is the precursor to long-term pleasure. When this happens, it's good to keep your greater goals in mind.

9. **Personal relationships.** Is there anyone you need to forgive? Do you hold lingering resentments toward anyone (even if you don't see them very often)? Is there anyone you avoid? Do you have supportive friends that you talk with regularly? Would you consider taking on the project of clearing up your personal relationships?

10. **Your word.** How good is your word? Can your friends and family count on you? Can you count on yourself? Do you withhold promises or agreements for fear you won't feel like keeping them in the moment? You can't cheat the system. Your word must be given in order to be good. Would you consider taking on the project of making your word good?

11. **Personal space.** How orderly is your immediate environment? Are your family and pets clean and well-fed? If your surroundings are unkempt, your life and health cannot possibly work well. From a holistic view, you are only as "together" as your most ignored pieces and parts. If you've let things slide, would you consider taking on the project of cleaning them up?

** Often, when we begin talking about these lifestyle factors, people say "I'll think about that once I'm feeling better." Bad news. It doesn't work that way. *These changes help you get better.* Don't let the list overwhelm you. You'll take one step at a time. We can help you prioritize and find support for the projects you choose. It's part of what we do.

Section Three — Structural Bodywork Program Goals

People undertake a structural bodywork program with certain goals in mind. Here are some examples:

1. **Relieve pain.** Common concerns include:
 - Back pain
 - Neck pain
 - Headaches including migraines
 - Shoulder or hip pain including sciatica
 - Symptoms attributed to Temporomandibular Joint Syndrome
 - Symptoms attributed to Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
 - Symptoms attributed to Fibromyalgia Syndrome
2. **Restore proper posture.** In restoring posture, participants hope to:
 - Reduce mechanical wear and tear on the joints, leading to greater longevity of the body's muscular and skeletal systems. This means the ability to move with comfort and perform activities you desire.
 - Improve appearance, confidence, and attitude.
3. **Other objectives.** Additional benefits of this therapy may include:
 - More energy
 - Better sleep
 - Improved digestion
 - Better balance and equilibrium, including improvement in symptoms from Parkinson's disease and MS (though the disease processes remain unchanged)
 - Less dizziness, ringing in the ears, and fewer ear infections
 - More (if you're unsure about the suitability of your goal to our program, just ask)

Do your goals include at least one of those listed above? If so, you could benefit from our program. We've had great results with all these types of problems with past clients.

Section Four — Program strategy

Structural bodywork works by restoring proper body alignment. Our technique involves careful analysis of the participant's body posture, followed by selective loosening of tissue that's too tight. We use primarily hands-on manual therapy (massage therapy techniques) to loosen the tissue.

Proper body alignment means:

- Unnecessary joint pressure is relieved
- Muscle tension and pain is reduced
- Nerve compression or entrapment is reduced
- Trigger points (a common cause of referred sensation) are relieved
- Your body moves easily and comfortably with a minimum of effort
- Functional longevity of the joints increases (joints don't wear out as fast)

Our free special report on **How Structural Bodywork Works** gives more information about our therapy model.

Find it at: www.wellnessimages.com/neuromuscular%2Opain%2Orelief.htm. If you don't have Internet access, phone us at 701-839-4755 and we'll mail you a copy.

Please read this report. It will help you understand our strategy so you can compare it with other models you have researched or tried. If you choose to participate in our program, this information will also form the foundation of a healing partnership between you and your therapist.

Any strategic approach has limitations. A structural bodywork program is limited by existing conditions that prevent improvement in posture. Though we may help people with these conditions, their presence will prevent our techniques from working as well as they otherwise could. Examples include spinal fusion, Harrington Rods, surgical fusion of the pelvic girdle, excessive scar tissue or other post-surgical damage, "bone on bone" joints, severe osteoporosis, muscle atrophy, and certain advanced disease processes.

In addition to strategies for the bodywork itself, as a participant in our program you may be encouraged to explore selected outside reading, undertake an introspective process, or consult with another health care professional to address related factors that could affect your progress.

Ok, you've got the inside scoop.

Now find out if you're ready to put it into action.

Your quiz starts on the next page...