



NO BONES ABOUT IT!

A MEMOIR OF A CHIROPRACTOR



JT ANDERSON, DC

No Bones About It - a memoir of a chiropractor dives deep into the art, philosophy, and science of chiropractic care. Doc JT Anderson has been in practice for over 28 years and has been the team chiropractor for the Denver Broncos.

NO BONES ABOUT IT- A Memoir of a Chiropractor

By JT Anderson, DC

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About the Author

JT Anderson (Doc JT) has been in chiropractic practice for over 28 years. has been the team chiropractor for the Denver Broncos, Colorado Crush, and Denver Outlaws. He holds a chiropractic license in Colorado and Florida.

He is certified in Whiplash and Brain Injury Traumatology, Manipulation Under Anesthesia, Dry Needling, Spinal Decompression, soft tissue therapy using the Graston technique and is certified in extremity adjusting. He received his Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) from Parker College of Chiropractic (now Parker University) in Dallas, Texas and has an exercise kinesiology degree from the University of Northern Colorado.

His wife, Bethany, son Caden, and daughter Elle, have lived in Parker, Colorado for many years and have built wonderful relationships in the community. Both his children attend Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Arizona.





Chapter 1: We All Have a Story

“Go long and I will make sure to hit you for a touchdown!” I told my 12-year-old best friend in the huddle. In my youth, I would be thrown in as a quarterback for a pickup football game around the local parks in my Cherry Creek neighborhood. As I stepped back, spying my speedy friend, I launched the football in an arc toward his awaiting hands, but a cannon of pain shot throughout my lower back and the ball tumbled in the air like a duck. I rolled on the hard ground in agony and couldn’t get up. “What just happened?” I thought to myself. After several minutes of excruciating pain, friends helped me up to my feet. I couldn’t stand for long though without the shock wave hitting me again, so I just laid down on the sidelines trying to stretch my back. The game continued without me and finally I was able to slowly waddle back to my house where my mother gently massaged my back and placed an ice pack on the lower spine to help with the pain.

A week later I felt normal again but was still ginger in my movements. Once again, I was called to play quarterback with my friends and decided to throw short passes to minimize the old heave-ho and the long toss. Halfway through the game I decided to test my lower back and asked a wide receiver to go deep down field and cut across the middle where he could find an opening. Dropping back, my teammate was open, and I hummed the football toward him. The pain erupted again, this time I was in so much pain that two older boys who were watching the game had to carry me home. Something was wrong and for a 12-year-old it was devastating confusing and scary.

My mother called our family physician, and I was recommended anti-inflammatories, muscle relaxers and rest. We purchased a waterbed to help with support of my spine and to provide heat to my body, (I ended up using the same bed until I graduated college); it provided warmth and cradled my spine to help with my sleeping posture. I decided for myself that I need to build strength in my body, especially with my lower back, but didn’t know where to begin. A next-door neighbor and friend of mine had a skinny bench

press with plastic, sand filled weighted discs in his garage. Do you remember that type of set up? In the late 70s and early 80s, they came in either a burgundy or a gray color. I had thought of myself as strong kid. He demonstrated the traditional bench press, using 70 lbs. of weight. After showing me through a few sets and reps how to bench press, I was intrigued. I thought I could lift that all day long. I laid down on the bench and he helped me lift the 70 lbs. bar off the rack. The descent was fast and the bar with the added weight pinned to my chest. I thought I was going to die! He helped me re-rack the bar and as I removed my body from the bench, I was mortified. We removed 20 lbs. and I tried again. Better, but still a feeble attempt and could only muster three reps before having to re-rack the bar. Embarrassed with my lack of strength, we found an appropriate weight that I could lift.

A fire was lit inside me, and I was determined to get stronger. I was turning 13 in a few weeks and asked my parents for my very own bench and weights. I began working out twice a day in my basement, getting progressively stronger and after a month I decided it was time to start training my legs. I took two metal folding card chairs, a hammer and created a squat rack. The bar fit between the large dents, and I could load the bar and perform squats. My mother had a group of ladies that came over to play bridge soon thereafter, and when she went to retrieve the damaged chairs, I was in deep trouble. I was grounded from lifting at home for two weeks. I decided to join the newly built Nautilus Fitness Center which was 6 miles from my house. I spent the entire summer riding my bike to and from the gym, learning how to exercise. Before my eighth- grade year, I would train at home in the morning, go to school, come home and do homework, and then jump on my bike and ride to the gym, day in and day out. My strength soared and my lower pain began to become much more tolerable.

Chapter 2: California Dreaming!

During the beginning of my freshman year, I played tennis at Cherry Creek High School in Colorado, known as a powerhouse for many sports, especially tennis. There were 200 kids in the tennis program. I worked hard on the court that year and ended up lettering, one of only 13 that would be awarded a letter. I was number 13, but it stands as one of my favorite accomplishments during high school. I also played on the freshmen “A” basketball team as a reserve during the winter season and beginning spring season made the freshman baseball team. I continued to work out in the gym feverishly and can’t remember a day where my muscles weren’t stiff and sore. I pushed myself and my body developed quickly. Life was good as I settled nicely into high school.

January of my freshman year, 1982, my father was rewarded with a work promotion and explained to my family that we were moving to southern California. I was to be uprooted from Cherry Creek High School in mid-February and placed in a new high school where I didn’t know a single soul. I had confidence in my athletic skills but had to try out all over again to make the “frosch” baseball squad. My new high school was called Capistrano Valley located in Mission Viejo, California. I vividly remember my dad walking me to the baseball diamond. I was dressed in a button-down, long sleeve maroon dress shirt with jeans and white tennis shoes. Definitely not a SoCal look! He introduced me to the freshman head baseball coach who explained that they had been practicing all winter and their team was set. The only position that was remotely available was having another pitcher on the team. I had pitched throughout my youth, but second base was my natural position. I knew at that moment, however, that if I didn’t pipe up, I would never have the chance to make the team. “I can pitch with the best of ‘em, Coach!” At that moment there was a glimmer of hope and a small opening, so he let me come back and try out. I spent hours in the batting cage, getting ready for my individual tryout, bashing balls left, center and right with only four days to prepare. The last batting session the morning before my tryout,

halfway through hitting balls thrown by my dad, my right lower back exploded with pain. I couldn't stand upright let alone swing. My Grandma Anderson, a former nurse, was visiting our family and took care of me the rest of the day and into the evening. I will never forget her magical hands that worked on the muscles that had locked up, placing pain cream on my lower spine and massaging it into the deep muscle layers of my back. It was because of her that I got through the tryout.

I ended up making the team and was a strong contributor both on the mound and at second base. I found a gym in El Toro, California called Superflex Gym. The owner, Kalman Szkalak, who had won the 1976 Mr. America in body building took me in and was a mentor. I received a free gym membership by helping him around the gym--cleaning, passing out leaflets and promoting his gym. I learned a ton from him as well as other elite body builders that flocked to this powerhouse gym. As I was 15 and didn't have a car, I borrowed a friend's skateboard for the beginning of summer. For two months, I would take the bus 8 miles to the El Toro stop and then skate downhill, another three miles to the gym, often crashing on the hard pavement and bloodying my knees and elbows. I would spend 6-8 hours of my day during training, working for Superflex, and educating myself about the body and how to build strength by observing and asking questions to gym members that seemed to be carved out of granite.

I was introduced to power lifting with my two strongest lifts including the dead lift and squat. I remember stopping by the gym on my 16th birthday weekend after spending a full day on Huntington beach. I walked in with board shorts, tank top and flip flops, loaded 415 lbs. on the squat rack, had two buddies spot me, dipped down for three reps, re-racked the weight, and left the gym. I was getting strong. Despite my strength however, I always felt the lower back twinge if I over did it and had to be cautious.

Superflex was my home away from home and I befriended many lifters during the hours spent in the gym. As I was squatting heavy weight during one of my leg routines, I made it through but had to sit down and rest due to my lower back pain. An older weightlifter that I had met a month prior could tell I was in pain and came up to me. "I noticed that your form is good

but when you squat, your pelvis drops low on the right side. Where is most of your pain?" I explained that my right lower back was the focal spot and always felt weaker than left side of my spine. He told me he was a chiropractor and had a practice a few miles from the gym. He offered to take a few x-rays of my spine at no charge and find out what the problem was. I was desperate but didn't want my parents to find out that I was going to consult with a chiropractor. Secretly, I ended up making an appointment with his office and discovered from the x-rays I had a moderate lower back scoliosis and a congenital lower lumbar bone issue. My right hip was extremely low, and my right leg was shorter than the left by an inch! The chiropractor outlined 6 weeks of treatment with therapies, including inverting myself on a special traction machine. He offered to treat me complimentary for the first few visits but then I would need to bring in my parents for authorization for the remaining visits. Things were different in back in the early 80s.

Almost immediately after I began treatment, I noticed relief. The pressure that had always been present in my lower back had disappeared after the first chiropractic adjustment. The first night I slept like a baby and felt as though the weight of the world left my spine. I rushed to explain to my parents about this profession called chiropractic. My mother took me to the third appointment and payment and scheduling arrangements were made. I found out in short order that chiropractic worked and began to study and research the profession. The doctor had an assistant with a heavy Indian accent, and though rarely could I understand him fully during my visits, I tried to follow his instructions as best as I could. He was very kind and helped me with the therapies including lower back traction. One of my fondest memories is when I took my very best friend with me to an appointment. Jimmy was curious about chiropractic and wanted to attend one of my treatment sessions. Following my regular chiropractic adjustments, I headed back for inversion therapy for my lower back. The assistant helped me begin the therapy with Jimmy watching in the corner. As I was suspended upside down, the assistant said with a heavy accent, "I want you to rerax and wose your eyes." As blood was rushing to my ears and head, I blurted out, "Roll my eyes?" Jimmy, always the comedian, couldn't stop laughing, tears rolling

down his cheeks. He was asked to leave but by that time, I was laughing along with him and couldn't complete my therapy anyway. It took Jimmy an hour to calm down and to this day we laugh hard about that visit.

Over time, I felt as healthy as ever using chiropractic care. My treatments not only helped my lower back pain but also oddly enough aided my digestion. I had a sensitive stomach growing up and had terrible colic when I was a baby. The chiropractor explained that the nerves of the mid to lower back travel to the stomach and digestive system and by removing nerve interference, I may notice a difference with digestion and stomach pain. It was life changing as adjustments were being made to the spine, my stomach pain improved, and I had much better digestion. He educated me on diet and how emotional distress affected my health. I found out that physical pain was only one form of stress, and my emotions and nutritional choices also played a key role in my overall well-being. Hippocrates proclaimed, "Look well to the spine for the cause of disease." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 states "Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So, you must honor God with your body." My newfound experience in chiropractic began to change my health for the better.

Chapter 3: Chiropractic 101

Chiropractic is defined by the Oxford dictionary as “A system of integrative medicine based on the diagnosis and manipulative treatment of misalignments of the joints, especially those of the spinal column, which are held to cause other disorders by affecting the nerves, muscles, and organs.” Furthermore, chiro means “hand” and practices is a Greek word, meaning “the system of or the use of or done.” Done by hand.

One of the most common questions people have regarding adjustment is “What makes that sound when you manipulate your spine or knuckles?” The Library of Congress along with many other resources state that “Scientists explain that synovial fluid present in your joints acts as a lubricant. The fluid contains the gases oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon dioxide. When you pop or crack a joint, you stretch the joint capsule. Gas is rapidly released, which forms bubbles. To crack the same knuckle again, you must wait until the gases return to the synovial fluid.”

Another common question is whether it is safe to pop your spine or knuckles? Dr. Robert Klapper, a surgeon, states “Cracking your knuckles does no harm at all to our joints,” he proclaims “It does not lead to arthritis.” August 13, 2018, Cedars-Sinai Staff. Furthermore, “Pain, swelling, or limited motion are signs that the joint has damage—possibly from arthritis, trauma, or gout,” says Dr. Klapper. If you don’t experience pain while knuckle cracking, then you’re free to indulge yourself, even if your occasional snapping, cracking, and popping sometimes startles those around you. “Some of us are just noisier than others when our joints crack,” says Dr. Klapper. “It’s all good.”

Chiropractic’s name was chosen by the developer of chiropractic, Daniel David (DD) Palmer.

A prolific reader of all things scientific, DD Palmer realized that although various forms of manipulation had been used for hundreds if not thousands

of years, no one had developed a philosophical or scientific rationale to explain their effects. Palmer's major contribution to the health field was therefore the codification of the philosophy, art and science of chiropractic which was based on his extensive study of anatomy and physiology.

Palmer performed the initial chiropractic adjustment in September 1895. Palmer examined a janitor who had become deaf 17 years prior after he felt something "give" in his back. Following the exam, he gave a crude "adjustment" to what he felt to be a misplaced vertebra in the upper back. The janitor then observed that his hearing improved over the course of treatments.

From that first adjustment, DD Palmer continued to develop chiropractic and in 1897, established the Palmer School of Cure, now known as the Palmer College of Chiropractic, in Davenport, Iowa, where it remains today. Following the first adjustment, many people became interested in Palmer's new science and healing art. Among his early students were Palmer's son, Bartlett Joshua (BJ), as well as members of the older healing arts of medicine and osteopathy. The first state law licensing chiropractors was passed in 1913, and by 1931, 39 states had given chiropractors legal recognition.

Today, there are more than 70,000 active chiropractic licenses in the United States. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands officially recognize chiropractic as a health care profession. Many other countries also recognize and regulate chiropractic, including Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, Australia, Japan, and Switzerland.

In his books on joints, Hippocrates (460–385 BCE), who is often referred to as the father of medicine, was the first physician to describe spinal manipulative techniques using gravity, for the treatment of scoliosis. In this case, the patient was tied to a ladder and inverted. The second technique he described involved the use of a table with various straps, wheels, and axles enabling traction to be applied. The hand, foot, seated body weight, or a wooden lever could then be used to impart spinal pressure or thrust to treat a "gibbus" or prominent vertebra. Hippocrates noted that this treatment should be followed by exercises.



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