



Dynamic Chiropractic – March 13, 1995, Vol. 13, Issue 06

My Encounter with the "Wolfboy"

By John Amaro, LAc, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM), FIAMA, DC

Having specialized in acupuncture along with my chiropractic practice for the last 24 years, I have perhaps seen more than the average number of unusual cases, because of the blending of these two specialties, and the number of difficult cases which seek acupuncture after conventional care has failed.

I first met Courtney when he accompanied his parents when they brought his little brother to the office for treatment of a severe pain syndrome. The younger brother, age 8, suffered with daily continuous pain in his left leg which would radiate into his groin and affect his entire leg. This cruel pain was nonresponsive to any orthopedic, neurologic or general medical care and, in fact, was diagnosed as simply idiopathic leg pain with no clue as to cause or to effective treatment.

The younger brother's leg pain had been basically continuous from age 5 with daily episodes of intermittent intractable pain which would keep him from school as often as one day a week. The worst part was the cries during the night which would wake the entire family; this scenario was more often than not repeated multiple times through the night.

When the family finally brought the younger brother to my office, it was out of desperation and despair. Examination was unremarkable and treatment was begun in an attempt to ease the pain, even though I frankly did not know exactly what I was treating except for the pain.

Courtney's younger brother seemed to have some minimal response to acupuncture treatment along with adjustments, but nothing to write about. I have often told doctors attending the acupuncture programs I routinely teach to always act upon your instincts and intuition even though sometimes it may be contrary to academia.

Even though numerous orthopedic evaluations as well as my own assessment did not produce any abnormality in any of the joints of the leg, I felt compelled following the sixth treatment to gently

manipulate the patella. I would love to tell you I adjusted his patella with full intent of a goal in mind and that my skill in extremity adjusting is second to none, but neither is the case. In fact it wasn't even a real manipulation, it was just a slight shove posterior and superior.

Courtney, his mother and father, and the younger brother, all had a look of shock on their faces (I could feel my shock) when an extremely loud "pop" filled the room from the adjustment of the patella.

That was nearly ten months ago. This young patient from that moment has never had another hour of pain. He had been in continuous pain for close to four full years, or to put it in perspective, almost 50 percent of his life.

We justify the acupuncture as being responsible for allowing the muscular system to relax to permit the adjustment to be accomplished, but the fact is this young lad obviously suffered with a simple patellar subluxation which was reduced to normalcy by manipulation of the joint.

I could take full credit as being an enlightened doctor with grandiose diagnostic skills and treatment abilities, but the fact is the adjustment was an accident, which was probably divinely inspired because it allowed me to see Courtney.

Courtney was an extremely athletically developed 14-year-old, which any 14-year-old girl would look at twice considering his strikingly handsome appearance. The only problem was Courtney was retarded at the first grade level as result of a DPT vaccination in his infancy.

Following the successful treatment of Courtney's little brother, his parents approached me with the challenge of treating Courtney. The parents advised me that the decision was almost final to commit Courtney to an institution because they no longer felt able to continue to care for him. The mother advised me that the situation had reached a fever pitch when just recently her husband had to pull her away from Courtney when she, in a sleepless, daze had her hands firmly planted around Courtney's throat in an attempt to strangle him. This was the real thing!

The decision to institutionalize is perhaps one of the most difficult decisions a parent can make, however in Courtney's case it promised relief to an entire family. To talk to Courtney to observe him and to know him during the daylight hours one would never consider an institution: he just seemed a little slow.

As the parents began to explain, the situation became much more obvious. Courtney was referred privately by his parents to me as a "wolfboy." Courtney would be in bed at night by 9:30 p.m. and would rest soundly until approximately 1:00 a.m. when he would begin howling louder and louder, sending shivers through his entire family. He would continue howling until finally his mother or father would get up from bed to turn him over or in some way disturb his deep sleep.

This loud, guttural howling resembled a wolf's howl, which was quite unnerving to say the least, but the main problem was this would occur with an average frequency of 20-25 times per night and had been going on for three full years.

Considering the fact the family was up half the night with the cries and screams of the younger brother combined with the Courtney's eerie situation, it was no wonder the parents had developed an institutional attitude.

To make matters worse, Courtney would literally rip his underwear to shreds each night during violent multiple masturbations. The parents brought in three pair of shredded underwear for my inspection. I was shocked, to put it mildly. It almost had the appearance that an animal had shredded them. His penis would bleed due to self-inflicted trauma.

I am in no way suggesting I feel Courtney was satanically possessed or was a "wolfboy," however, his parents truly wondered about both. One of the most notable observations was there was an obvious family love when they were all together, and frankly Courtney seemed most of the time like a regular 14-year-old who had a grade school mentality. You would never guess this situation could be real.

The parents were emotionally distraught and exhausted concerning the seriousness of this situation, and asked my help to see if possibly acupuncture and chiropractic might do something to save their family.

Acupuncture examination was predictable in that his spleen and pericardium (circulation/sex) meridian were pathologically deficient as well as the kidney meridian.

Courtney began making noticeable improvement immediately in his treatment. After the 12th visit I suggested to Courtney that if he could go seven days with no more than a total of five incidences for the entire week, I would take him and his family and the entire office staff out for pizza. I am pleased to say we had the pizza party.

Now Courtney's usual night is to have no incidences: he sleeps soundly, and his parents have recovered both physically and emotionally. Every so often Courtney is heard to growl slightly, however, a parent can just call to him and he will turn over and go back to sleep.

Without acupuncture this child would have been doomed to an institutional life, his parents would have suffered emotional calamity, and his brothers would never quite be the same.

With the paramount interest in "alternative medicine" which is sweeping the world, now is the time to add this exciting dimension to healing into your armamentarium. Acupuncture, even when practiced with non-invasive procedures, is safe, effective and acceptable within the chiropractic profession.

John Amaro, DC, FIACA, Dipl.Ac.

Carefree, Arizona

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