



FT Bath · For Jay · “I have hoovered, done DIY and lifted a chair!”

I can see you are not impressed and thinking “so what”. For me though, being able to do these activities again for the first time in years is a major milestone on my road to recovering, having just completed 10 sessions of Structural Integration with Jay Ruddock.

Having been medically retired from work for four years following a catalogue of serious accidents and injuries starting from when I was seven years old, my continued increase in chronic pain levels and decrease in abilities seemed to be inevitable. As a woman in my mid 40s this was not a wonderful situation as I felt I still have a lot to offer the world and dreams that I would want to fulfil, if I could only stabilise my condition or, better still, reverse the slippery slope of my decline.

Just as I was beginning to despair of anything that would ever give any major improvement, along came Mr Ruddock and his Structural Integration technique. To whet your appetite, let me just give you a few of the benefits I have personally experienced at the hands of Jay during my recently completed Structural Integration course.

- Vastly decreased levels of (continuous) pain in joints and associated muscles.
- Increased mobility in all spinal joints.
- Straightening of bowed right leg.
- Removal of pre-menstrual pain.
- Vast increase in physical activity.
- Positive feeling for the future regarding diagnosis of chronic illness.
- Feeling of being able to do what I want without my pain and chronic conditions dictating my life.
- Awareness of how to correctly retrain my body posture as instructed.



- Awareness of how to use muscles correctly, especially for breathing – which in turn aids healing.
- Psychologically stronger after leaving emotional baggage behind.
- Reduction in prescription tablets used in pain relief.
- Feeling of being able to face the future optimistically.

When I first heard about the Structural Integration technique, I was sceptical that it would make little if any difference to my array of ongoing chronic disabilities. Since my condition had started to deteriorate drastically in the last ten years or so, I have in desperation sought out anything that I thought might give even a tiny amount of relief, from “gong” therapy, chiropractors, prescription drugs to instruction by the RUH pain relief clinic and a whole lot more besides! The instant and ongoing results of which were varied and temporal.

However, being the eternal optimist I thought I would give Structural Integration technique a try.

Jay patiently explained the principles of Structural Integration to me after having taken a detailed medical history. He carefully listened to my fears about the possibility of Structural Integration inadvertently cause me more damage and make my chronic pain situation worse.

Even after the first session I felt more positive about my bodies degeneration, and my walking was a lot easier and more fluid. One surprising effect of the treatment was that I noticed it greatly reduced my PMT, especially the gnawing lower abdominal pains that women get just before a period starts.

I was not a happy bunny after the second session. Looking back I am really pleased and relieved it happened, but the resulting unleash of locked in emotions (coming from being hit by a car as a child), was a few days my poor husband would like to forget! My right foot, which before treatment had splayed out at a 30% angle, was now almost parallel with the left.



After session three my body just felt so much looser in the torso area, which increased my range of movement. This was a great breakthrough for me as I suffer from arthritis at the top and bottom of my spine and have had scar tissue in the middle for many years as well as the resulting damage from a prolapsed disc from about ten years ago.

I also found I needed a lot more sleep, hardly surprising with all that physical and psychological adjustment going on. I was also not so stiff doing my daily exercises; it felt like someone had “oiled” my joints and muscles.

Very strangely, after session four, I felt different about my body image. I didn’t feel like I was “clumping” around in a heavy footed way anymore, that my body wasn’t experiencing the heavy feeling I had before of dragging it around every where. During my daily walking exercises of a mile or two, I felt more light, and graceful and my gait felt smooth, not its usual difficult pained awkwardness.

I felt something change inside me that said “I don’t have to have this label anymore of being disabled, of being slow and difficult, of having to watch every single thing I did and the way I moved and my posture”, it was an enormous releasing moment to see myself in a different way after so many years of having a body image of myself degenerating.

Even though I have arthritis in my right knee I was also able to put my knees together for the first time in years without pain or a gap between them.

A few days later I noticed pain and stiffness had returned to my right hip and pelvic area, oh dear, maybe I was doing too much too soon with my regained physical abilities.

Also, I noticed that I had started to grind my teeth during my sleep. This lasted until Jay did a session on my face and neck.



Session five continued to help the traumas of the past be released, each session somehow feels like it's peeling away another layer of locked in emotions.

More awareness of my body image issues was also released.

I felt "bulldozed" physically, mentally and spiritually for a couple of days, but this was followed by a change of energy which left me feeling more optimistic, and as if a big burden had gone from me.

For the first time in years I was able to help my husband do some DIY by painting a skirting board. This was amazing, as getting to the floor had in the past not been easy for me, and also to have the concentration to do such a fiddly job was a change for me.

The sixth session was my personal favourite. It really got into all those "nooks and crannies" that other treatments didn't seem to touch, it certainly had the "ah, that's the spot" factor for me as Jay worked over my torso and legs. Not surprisingly, the muscles in lower back and legs felt very tired the next day. My body wanted to rest, but my mind was very active and I couldn't help wanting to do tasks, I just couldn't sit still; there was definitely an imbalance in my energy.

My breathing was much easier and more effective after the face, head and neck treatment of the seventh session. The knock-on effect of this was that I now able to appreciate the full impact of how much more efficient my lungs and abdomen worked in my breathing as a result of work Jay did on my torso in earlier sessions. The pain in my neck from the arthritis and tension had disappeared, but the lower back pain and leg pains had returned.

After session eight, I felt a bit down cast that my lower back, pelvis and legs still seemed to have pain in them. I began to wonder if I would ever be free of this level of debilitating pain that so often affected me. Feeling into my body, I could sense that although the pain was



getting me down, it somehow seemed to be a different sort of pain to the usual, the nearest I can get to explaining it is that instead of it being the usual hot dull thudding, it now seemed to be more the sort of deep muscle ache that I would expect someone to have who has gone far beyond their normal physical capacity during a crisis eg holding onto someone for hours to stop them falling over a cliff.

The ongoing release of long held traumas continued which left me tearful, tired and withdrawn. This was followed by a feeling of inwardly being pulled in two directions at the same time. I felt the time had come to talk to a trusted friend who had had some experience in counselling. I realised from our talk, that I was ready to move into the new me that I had discovered in recent weeks, but the fear of letting go of what I knew (ie the old me) was holding me back.

The ninth treatment again removed my PMT symptoms, as well as much of the pain that had come about following on from the previous session. Within a couple of days I was back to trying to see how much more I could do around the house and garden.

Psychologically, I noticed another change in the way I perceived myself and the world. As a chronic pain sufferer, before I had Structural Integration, I was very much aware of how I constantly had to keep battling to stop my world narrowing, a feeling similar to being in a room with the walls forever closing in on me unless I took drastic action to stem the shrinking, eg keep pushing myself to go out socially most days, despite my pain and anxiety. What I notice is happening now, is yes I still go out but no longer have this fear that I have to, I don't have to keep pushing myself, which in turn used even more energy, my shrinking walls have now disappeared!

I had a feeling during my last session of the course of ten, that somehow it was almost the beginning of things for me. Yes of course my pain had been reduced, my muscles were on the whole working together properly, I had more symmetry, and could certainly do more and



on the whole had more energy, but although in theory ten sessions is enough physically, I just knew that the ten sessions had been a catalyst for the gates of deep change to open within me. Reflecting on the session, I could see that I had great optimism for the future but this was also mingled with an anxiety of “going it alone”.

Jay and I agreed to have a review session, which helped greatly to put things in perspective.

This is what my husband said when I asked him what his observations of me had been from my ten sessions of Structural Integration, “doing more and better, moving more and better”.

Update

It is now just over three weeks since my tenth session. For the last ten days I have been totally without pain killers, my awareness has deepened to levels I would never have thought possible a few weeks ago, and my days are spent allowing myself to start actually planning all the exciting things I want to do with my life rather than just dream about it. Now I feel an active member of the family, rather than a drain and a strain on people. So, I must just get back to cleaning the house, a novelty for me!