

## [Health Nutrition and Wellness Blog](#)

Ayurvedic Natural or Alternative Medicine – Zrii – NutriiVeda

*Health Nutrition & Wellness .com*

visit our *Mall* | visit our *Blog* | request more information 



- [home](#)
- [about](#)
- [health](#)
- [nutrition](#)
- [wellness](#)
- [autism](#)
- [blog](#)
- [mall](#)
- [contact](#)

« [Cranberries: A Winter Superfood](#)  
[Olive Oil: A Mediterranean Miracle](#) »

### How to “Unlearn Your Pain”

2

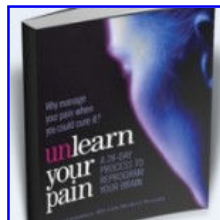
50

7

**Share**

vote

now



Health, Nutrition and Wellness is pleased to feature a guest writer, **Dr. Howard Schubiner**. I functioned as a ‘Pain Specialist’ for five years in the Pharmaceutical Industry and witnessed the how chronic pain can decimate an individual’s quality of life. An estimated 50 million Americans suffer from persistent pain each year according to the American Pain Foundation. One in three Americans lose more than 20 hours of sleep each month due to pain (AACPI). Dr. Schubiner’s brilliant book **‘Unlearn Your Pain’** demonstrates that the underlying reason for chronic pain is nerve sensitization and learned nerve pathways, rather than actual tissue destruction. Instead of overloading your body with harmful opioid analgesics, anticonvulsants, corticosteroids and antidepressants, I encourage you to look into Dr. Schubiner’s natural and well researched approach.

**How to “Unlearn Your Pain”**



**Howard Schubiner, MD**

There are literally millions of people currently suffering with chronic pain. My work with people with chronic pain has shown me what a devastating impact pain can have on one's life. Every day, someone tells me that pain has “ruined their life,” or that they have become a “professional pain patient.” Since I started the Unlearn Your Pain program in 2003, I have learned a great deal about pain and I am thrilled to report that we have seen amazing results in the majority of people who enter this program. In fact, a recent follow up study showed that people who entered the 4-week program at Providence Hospital in Southfield, MI had the following results. 67% had at least a 30% reduction in pain at a 6 month follow up evaluation and 54% had at least a 50% reduction in pain. These are remarkable results, given that the average duration of pain was about 9 years!

There are several steps to Unlearning Your Pain and the complete program for healing can be found in my book. In this article, I will offer a synopsis of the steps that I have found helpful in reversing chronic pain.

First, it is critical to understand what is causing the pain. This might seem easy, but often it is more difficult than one might imagine. Those with chronic pain that is caused by cancer often require strong pain medications. I do not work with pain caused by cancer, fractures, or infections/inflammation. However, the majority of people with chronic pain have pain that is diagnosed as fibromyalgia, migraine or tension headaches, or irritable bowel syndrome. The pain in those disorders is just as real as the pain caused by cancer, fractures or infections. However, that pain is not caused by a structural disease process in the body. It is caused by learned nerve pathways. Learned nerve pathways are simply connections between the brain and body that produce actions in the body. If you learned to ride a bicycle as a child, that develops a learned nerve pathway. That pathway will always exist and you'll be able to ride a bike later in life. Signing a name, eating, walking, and reacting to every day events are all caused by learned nerve pathways. Cutting edge neuroscience has shown that pain pathways can be learned and can persist for year in the absence of a disease process in the body. This is the cause of most chronic pain, including most back and neck pain. (Please see my website or my book for a detailed description of how back and neck pains are typically caused by these pathways.)

Once you have determined that your pain is caused by learned nerve pathways (this is also known as Tension Myositis Syndrome, a term coined by Dr. John Sarno in *The Mindbody Prescription*, or Mind Body Syndrome, as described in *Unlearn Your Pain*), the next step is to figure out what has led to the development of these pain pathways. There is a detailed process for doing this in *Unlearn Your Pain*. Briefly, a careful review of life events is usually sufficient to find connections between stressful life events and the onset of these pain syndromes. Here are an example that illustrate how stressful life events can trigger severe and chronic pain.

A 36 year old man was the oldest of three children and when his parents divorced, he was sent to live with his father, while his younger sisters stayed with their mother. His father never showed him that he was loved and when his father remarried, his step-mother decided to have him sent to a home for orphaned boys to be raised. He stayed in this home for about 6 years until he was 18. Once on his own, he made his way in the world and eventually had a good job, was married and had two small children. He had no TMS symptoms during all those years. His father had moved out of town, and one day when his father was visiting his sister, he asked his father to come and visit his children. The father came to their house, but was drunk, and only stayed for a few minutes, showing no affection for the children. Within minutes, the man developed abdominal and flank pain. The pain worsened over time. He found that when he tried to drink alcohol, he immediately developed nausea and vomiting. Multiple medical evaluations over several years revealed no cause for the pains and he was placed on narcotic analgesics.

The third step in the process of healing is to recognize that the pain is caused by learned nerve pathways, that there is no serious physical or structural problem in your body, and that you can actually get better! This is a powerful and important step that activates healing and serves to reduce pain.

Finally, I suggest a process to reverse the pain. In the program I've developed, it consists of a 4-week course of exercises designed to better understand and cope with stress and emotional distress. The program is contained in *Unlearn Your Pain* and consists of therapeutic writing exercises, meditative exercises, sets of affirmations, and learning to make necessary changes to promote contentment and well-being.

Here are some of the writing exercises that I recommend.

- 1) Free-writing exercises on a topic that has been troubling (either from the past or present): write quickly and freely without concern for grammar or punctuation; express your feelings fully; writing several days in a row on a specific topic usually helps us get our deepest feelings out and understand why we are bothered and what we can do about the situation.
- 2) Writing unsent letters. These letters can be to anyone from your past or present, or even to institutions or aspects of yourself. These work in a similar fashion to the free-writing exercises.

I also recommend mindfulness meditation as a powerful method of seeing the truth about issues in one's life and coping with them. I have taught mindfulness for over a decade and find it to be a simple, yet remarkable tool that can be used on a daily basis by anyone.

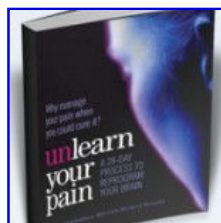
Affirmations or self-talk is another way to reverse pain because it allows the conscious parts of the brain to retrain and override the subconscious parts of the brain. It is these subconscious or automatic parts of the brain that create and perpetuate chronic pain pathways.

It is truly amazing to see people take on the challenge of changing their lives in order to reverse their pain. Some people get better quite quickly as they learn to let go of anger, guilt, or fear from prior stressful events. Others need to make significant changes in their lives in order to free themselves from stressful situations that are ongoing. Some people gradually work on taking control and stopping their pain over time. The key to resolving chronic pain is understanding what is causing it. If you suffer from chronic pain and haven't been helped by the traditional medical or alternative health methods, you might be suffering from a condition (learned nerve pathways) that can be reversed. And it might not be that difficult to accomplish.

Read this woman’s story as an example of the remarkable recoveries that can occur within a relatively short time after learning that real pain can be caused by learned nerve pathways, which she refers to as MBS (Mind Body Syndrome).

Before I was referred to Dr. Schubiner by my regular doctor, I was nearly incapacitated. I was “diagnosed” with interstitial cystitis, fibromyalgia, vulvar vestibulitis, irritable bowel syndrome, trochanteric bursitis, back problems, all of which caused PAIN—PAIN—PAIN. I was feeling that my life as an active, productive human being was over. The PAIN as well as the medications (Darvocet, Vicoden, etc.) made me so tired, I could hardly function. Truly I had “chronic fatigue” and I was somewhat depressed and homebound. I was afraid to go off the interstitial cystitis diet, afraid of re-injuring my back, afraid to be “too active,” afraid! I even had to have care from my long term home health care insurance for over two months.

After I met Dr. Schubiner and read his book (Unlearn Your Pain), I began to have hope. After the physical exam when the diagnosis of MBS was confirmed, I was determined to help myself through the class. The seminars were very informative and interesting. I worked hard at doing the homework (the reading, the writing exercises and listening to the meditation CD). After the second week, I began to see improvement. I learned that there was no danger in trying new food, walking, shopping by myself, etc. Slowly, slowly, I began to regain mobility and “joi de vivre.” After a while, I even danced at a wedding, and have done so twice more. Hoorray!! Appreciating every improvement is part of the cure. I thank you for giving me my life back.



Unlearn Your Pain is available from <http://www.amazon.com> or from [www.unlearnyourpain.com](http://www.unlearnyourpain.com)

**Please Share and Enjoy:**

Related posts:

1. [Holistic Stress Remedies](#) Stress is an unavoidable fact of life and too much...
2. [Holistic Remedies for Smoking Addiction](#) I have been involved in the pharmaceutical industry for nearly...
3. [Triphala – The Power of Three](#) The word ‘Ayurveda’ is from the ancient Indian language, Sanskrit,...
4. [Holistic Methods to Combat Flu Season](#) Flu season is here. Everywhere you go, there are pale...
5. [Holistic Remedies for Sore Throats](#) Flu season is here! Two of the common initial indicators...

Related posts brought to you by [Yet Another Related Posts Plugin](#).

Tags: [cure pain](#), [Health](#), [Holistic](#), [Natural methods](#), [pain](#), [Wellness](#)

This entry was posted on Saturday, January 29th, 2011 at 12:08 pm and is filed under [Wellness](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

## Leave a Reply

You must be [logged in](#) to post a comment.



## Login

Username:

Password:

Remember me

Login »

[Register](#)

[Lost your password?](#)

## • Contact Us

Contact us using the form below

First name: \*