

Foreword

by H Larry Elman and Cheryl J Elman

Dave Elman Hypnosis Institute Inc.

My father, Dave Elman, was introduced to hypnosis by my grandfather, Jacob Kopelman who was a hypnosis hobbyist. When Dave was 8 years old, he saw the results of what hypnosis could do for a patient in extreme pain. His father was bedridden with a painful cancer. A friend who was a “hypnotist” stopped by at Jake’s home in Fargo, North Dakota when he heard about Jacob being bed-ridden, and alleviated the intensity of his pain.

Dave remembered that his dad was able to get out of bed and play with all the children, and then left town on the train the next morning to visit several of his customers and collect overdue money which he could leave to his family. Although Jacob died on the train before reaching home, the hypnosis made it possible for Dave’s father to rally during his final days. This made a big impact on Dave who began a life-long quest into the mysteries and capabilities of the mind and suggestion.

Dave progressed through careers which included being a Vaudeville troupe player, a composer and lyricist of blues music for WC Handy, working various radio production roles including a national radio program called Hobby Lobby, and producing War Bond and Victory Bond Auctions. He created audience visualization and involvement by suggesting they use the power of their minds. While doing some hypnosis stage shows as benefits for local charities, Dave was approached by several physicians to teach them hypnosis for medical applications.

The development of Dave Elman’s Course in Medical Hypnosis became an evolutionary process of Dave’s theories and field testing performed by the physicians and dentists taking the courses. They collaborated and tested their findings and the course material grew yearly as a result. Dave and his wife Pauline continued to teach across the continent from the late 1940’s through 1962 which was when he had a heart attack while teaching in California. No longer able to travel, Dave took the time to write his classic book *Findings in Hypnosis* (Elman, 1964) which is published today as *Hypnotherapy* by Dave Elman. The book was compiled from Dave’s course materials and his reflections on his 13 years teaching. He supplemented the book with transcriptions from some of his classroom recordings.

Dave Elman’s process-based methods and client-centered approach has become an influence in many hypnosis courses today. Globally, clinical hypnosis and mindfulness practitioners have built their own toolboxes of techniques and strategies to use with their clients, including teaching them ways to use hypnosis on themselves through self-hypnosis, or as Dave Elman called it, “auto-suggestion”.

The word “hypnosis” has had different connotations to make it more palatable for the recipient. Among the most popular today are mindfulness, meditation, guided-imagery, neurolinguistic programming, guided visualization, creative visualization, trance, self-hypnosis, and self-suggestion. Dave suggested to the physicians and dentists in the class to refer to it as “medical relaxation”. Whatever you choose to call it or consider it, this book will teach you how to use self-hypnosis to achieve better control over your persistent pain.

This is a serious book for anyone suffering with chronic pain and hopelessness. It is a self-guided manual for pain relief by two men who have lived these principles. We have had the pleasure of knowing both Roy Hunter and Dr. Bruce Eimer for over ten years. So many of the books we have read or recommended were for training hypnotists. It was extremely interesting to read this book geared towards the person with chronic pain, and yet this book will still benefit a practitioner to read and guide his or her clients through some of these techniques.

Taming Chronic Pain addresses the intersection of the physical and psychological issues in chronic pain. This refreshing approach and the techniques in this book guide the reader on a personal and unique journey to understand and befriend his or her own chronic pain. The authors help the reader explore, and thus understand, the reader’s relationship with his or her pain. This understanding begins with listening to your body and applying hands-on mindfulness techniques. Throughout the book there are “Pain Takeaways” to help build and reinforce “mindful awareness”. The purpose is to reduce pain to tolerable levels. Due to the cyclical nature of chronic pain, recurring pain is a given. However, debilitating levels of pain are no longer a way of life and using these techniques will help to turn down the volume.

Taming Chronic Pain does not offer cookie cutter remedies. Like Dave Elman’s methods, the authors offer principles for anyone with persistent pain by giving them tools to suffer less and gain more functionality and peace. Like Dave Elman, the authors draw parallels to the Mind-Body connection and help the reader tame the pain by using his or her brain to accept responsibility for what the reader does about the pain. The reader is encouraged to stop trying to “kill” the pain, and instead, to build a non-adversarial relationship with it.

Mindfulness, defined as living in the present moment, helps combat helplessness and powerlessness. Mindfulness helps to harness the power of your mind in daydreaming as self-hypnosis, which is what Dave Elman referred to as autosuggestion. This helps for taming and controlling the persistent pain.

As hypnotherapists, we can attest to the power of the mind. As Dave Elman’s son, I (H Larry Elman) took his course along-side the medical doctors three times during my teenage years. I have used it throughout my lifetime on myself, and at times for friends until re-entering the hypnosis world after retirement from my Air Force and aeronautical engineering careers. Currently, my wife, Cheryl Elman and I travel globally as hypnosis

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instructors and speakers and we have physically taught in 17 countries, and much more when including our online classes now.

I (Cheryl Elman) became a hypnotist 16 years after being hypnotized to stop smoking two to three and a half packs per day. As an artist, a teacher, and a sales and marketing executive, I have found the power of suggestion, motivation and visualization come naturally to me. As you read through this book, you get to bring all your skills and experiences with you to create and strengthen your own suggestions, visualizations and confidence as you do each of the Mindfulness Meditation Exercises, or think through each Pain Takeaway. Read this book and do the exercises, and you will learn to use your inner resources to restructure your physical and emotional way of looking at your chronic pain.

We have a friend named Harry who had his own construction company. A storm was coming, and they had taken down the scaffolding around a house and Harry went back up on the roof to check one more time that the materials were secure and covered. Unfortunately, he lost his balance and did a somersault off the roof, down two stories and fortunately righted himself enough to land on his knees and both hands. He snapped his femur and bones in both hands and wrists. As Harry healed, it became evident that he would no longer be able to build houses or work much in construction. It would be too much on his body.

So, we invited Harry to take our Hypnosis Certification Course to give him the opportunity to begin a new, non-physical career. He loved the course and embraced all the material. It has been almost 10 years later now, and although he did not become a professional hypnotist, the course changed his life. In learning about various pain control techniques such as glove anesthesia and the use of his own internal control room, Harry learned to turn down his pain through self-hypnosis. Harry also created his own pain taming technique. He still has chronic pain, yet each morning Harry turns on his self-created controls and turns down his discomfort enough to go to work as a head mechanic and general manager of an auto repair shop. Harry also loves to work on race cars. He can still feel some discomfort, which serves the purpose of protecting his body from getting hurt. Pain is important as the authors have pointed out several times throughout the book – turning down vs turning off.

When Harry is finished for the day and gets home, he does turn that mechanism off – his shield diminishes, and he has a lot less comfort. When asked why he does this, he says that to keep his pain at the level he needs to during the day so that he can reach under, around and through motors, he must expend a lot of mental energy. Shutting this mechanism down gives his mind the release it needs to rest up for the next day.

Throughout this book there are mindfulness exercises, relaxation techniques and meditations which are easy to access. Both Dr. Bruce Eimer and Roy Hunter have each suffered physical trauma and they both live with chronic pain. They use their personal life stories and case examples from their professional practices to illustrate the effectiveness of the techniques they teach and to encourage readers to visualize their own relief.

Within this book is a workbook in awareness and acceptance including a Daily Pain Watcher Journal, a Movements Causing Pain Inventory, and a Pain Tracking Diary. These tools will help you to become engaged intimately with your own pain. There are also psychological strategies for behavior modification to help you adjust your behavior for persistently distressing pain.

Dave Elman methods have been interlaced throughout the book as it centers on you personally and your needs. The authors explain how to use these methods and others to constructively reframe your personal mind-body connection. The discussion helps you to choose behaviors that can bring you pain relief including the release of toxic memories which feed the pain. You will learn to envision wellness by identifying your goals and desires.

To whom do we recommend this?

- To you, the individual who has chronic pain.
- To you, a caretaker of someone else with chronic pain.
- To you, the psychology or hypnotherapy practitioner to understand and share these techniques with your patients or clients.
 - To you, the medical staff who care for people who have pain or who have developing conditions which may create chronic pain.
 - To you, who want to understand pain relief possibilities beyond pharmacology as the “magic” solution.

If you have chronic pain, care for someone who does, or work professionally with people who do, you will benefit greatly by reading this book.

*-- H. Larry Elman and Cheryl J. Elman
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