

Interview for “UnBreak Your Health” by Alan Smith

Today, Tyler R. Tichelaar of Reader Views is pleased to be joined by Alan Smith, who is here to talk about his new book “UnBreak Your Health.”

Alan Smith has found greater health and happiness thanks to complementary and alternative therapies. A few years ago his deteriorating health took him to the finest medical facility in the world, The Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Unfortunately they didn't have any solutions for his digestive problems. Just a few weeks later he discovered a new book by Bruce Lipton, Ph.D. called “Biology of Belief.” This was the kind of answer he had been searching for—scientific evidence that the energy of thoughts and feelings could directly influence the function of cells. In other words, the right beliefs and attitudes could improve health! Lipton's book led him to Rob Williams's PSYCH-K® process. With the first signs of improvement he became so excited about complementary and alternative therapies that he began offering PSYCH-K® in Plano, Texas. The challenge of introducing a new type of healing, especially in a conservative Southern location, was the inspiration for “UnBreak Your Health.”

Tyler: Thank you for joining me today, Alan. I understand “UnBreak Your Health” is a complete guide to over 300 complementary and alternative therapies. Would you begin by giving us just a taste of what some of those therapies are and what they are treatments for?

Alan: Tyler, complementary and alternative therapies, or CAM as it's called, run the gamut from ancient healing therapies like acupuncture to the latest cold laser technology. Some of them are very specific in purpose like Auditory Intervention Technique for ADD, ADHD and other attention disorders. It's a treatment developed by a French physician using sound to reprogram the way the brain processes information. Doula therapy was developed by doctors and nurses to help pregnant women have safe and successful birthing experiences. The Ornish Program is the only medically proven therapy to reverse heart disease naturally, and it also was developed by a doctor.

The vast majority of therapies in the book however are multi-purpose; they can address a wide variety of health problems, which is one of the reasons there is no disease listing in the Index. I know people are looking for quick, easy answers but that's not how our health works and by encouraging people to read the whole book they'll pick up the knowledge that will help them find their own healing path. Therapies like acupuncture, homeopathy, even EFT can be used for a diverse range of health problems.

While every therapy in my book will work for someone, nothing in the book will work for everyone. If you accept the instinctive concept that we are whole beings of body, mind and energy/spirit, then you have to appreciate that your illness or disease is unique too. That means your health solution is like a combination lock that only you can unlock. We all have to take

responsibility for our own health and learn what our body, mind and spirit or energy system factors are in our unique health problems and how to correct them.

That's not exactly the American way! We like fast, easy answers to everything, usually in the form of a pill, and we want somebody else to take care of us. I often try to explain it with the story about the ancient Chinese Master in the temple talking with a young student. The young man asked his mentor, "Why do we meditate every day, do hours of exercise and till the soil to grow good food?" The old man smiled knowingly and said simply, "If you don't take care of your house, where you gonna live?"

Tyler: Alan, how did you go about compiling the book?

Alan: Fortunately my college degree from decades ago was in journalism. Back in the dark ages you actually had to research using libraries, books, magazines and interviewing people. Today the Internet gives you a faster start on research but my background in reporting gave me the framework to produce the book.

I will say it was funny how it grew to the size it is now. Originally I started out with about 60 therapies, which was more than double anything that had been written before so I thought the subject would make a beneficial book. But once I started researching a therapy I'd usually discover one or two more that I'd never heard of before. The list just kept growing and growing until I simply drew a line in the sand a year ago and said "Enough!" I've probably missed some good ones and I've already started collecting new therapies for the next edition.

Tyler: How did you decide what to include, or did you have items you chose to leave out for any reason?

Alan: I wanted to include everything I possibly could but it, became pretty obvious early in the process that the same basic therapy was often just being tweaked a little so a different therapist could put his or her own name on it. I didn't need to put 100 versions of the same thing in the book so I tried to set up some benchmarks. One of them was a minimum level of use or having a certain number of practitioners in the U.S. along with other criteria. After all, to be of any benefit people would need to be able to find practitioners all across the country.

Tyler: I am intrigued by the title. What do you hope it says to the potential reader of the book?

Alan: The title comes from the old expression "You can't unbreak the mirror" which is similar to the old spilt milk and water under the bridge sayings. The way I explain it is that doctors try to glue your broken health back together with drugs and my book is about everything else so I wanted the title to make the distinction clear. It also tries to say that it is possible to find therapies that not only repair your health but restore it to a better, earlier condition. Some of the common traits of these complementary and alternative therapies are that they try to treat the source of a problem, not just the symptoms, which is what most doctors are doing with prescription drugs. By treating the source, and treating all of the problem (body, mind and spirit/energy) you can achieve better health than you may imagine is possible. I know, I've been there, and these therapies have restored my health better than I dared to dream possible just a few years ago.

Tyler: Alan, will you tell us a little bit about your own medical background and interest in non-conventional medicine?

Alan: My “medical background” is that I’ve been a patient of too many doctors for too many problems for too long. I admit right up front that I have no medical training other than being on the receiving end. I’m simply a patient, just like my readers. Maybe that’s why so many people love my little book; it’s designed for people just like them by someone who is just like them.

“UnBreak Your Health” is the book I wish had been available a few years ago after my disappointing trip to the Mayo Clinic, as you said, the finest medical facility in the world. The problem is that modern medicine doesn’t have all of the answers. In fact, they still don’t have all of the questions at this point!

After days of testing at Mayo I was told, “We have good news and bad news. The good news is it isn’t going to kill you. The bad news is you aren’t going to like it, and there isn’t anything we can do about it.” I kept waiting for the drum roll and a punchline, but there wasn’t one. When you run out of options you become very, very interested in ANY alternative! Unfortunately most of us wait until we’ve run out of options before discovering all of the wonderful therapies available today. I hope getting the word out about my book will change that.

Tyler: I understand your interests in alternative therapies began as the result of digestive problems? Will you tell us a little bit about your ailment and the therapy you used to improve the situation?

Alan: I hate to get into an “organ recital,” meaning running down all of my health problems, but let’s just say it’s one of the chronic problems that doctors really can’t fix. My particular issue was digestive and in hindsight it was probably caused by more than 20 years of travel combined with the stress of working in a dying industry for too long. It’s not a question of what happens to us in life, it’s how we react that matters. In my case there were subconscious beliefs about work that weren’t helping me at that time. I discovered the PSYCH-K process that provides for direct communication with the subconscious and a way to reprogram subconscious beliefs easily. In my case that helped a lot.

I’d like to add that many people have similar problems resulting in a variety of health issues. In many cases what’s happened is that our incredible bodies were never built to handle the stress of 24/7 living like we have today. It’s called the Tiger of the Mind Syndrome. We were designed to deal with the tiger in the bushes with fight or flight, both short-term responses to survival stress. Today the tiger is in our minds and it’s there 24 hours a day, every day. It’s no wonder our bodies break down!

Tyler: Alan, I’m intrigued by the Psych-K process. Are you saying then that our mind and thoughts influence our health? Tell us more about how this process works. How do we figure out what the subconscious thoughts are that are causing us problems and how do we change those thoughts?

Alan: Yes, and that’s been confirmed by science. Bruce Lipton has new research on the issue but in the 1970s psychoneuroimmunology or PNI was created with the discovery of peptides, the messenger molecules that connect the brain to the body’s immune system. It’s the reason you rarely get sick when you’re excited and having a wonderful time in life but seem to catch every bug in the world when you’re depressed and stressed out. Science is just beginning to understand the strength

and range of the mind-body connection. In many cases our health problems are really just the body doing what it's being told by the subconscious mind, the part that controls all of your body's systems, no matter how destructive or painful it may be.

PSYCH-K is based on kinesiology or muscle testing. Much like the autonomic responses used by a polygraph machine to tell truth from lies, your body reacts to statements signaling agreement or disagreement by the subconscious. A facilitator pushes down very lightly on your extended arm after you repeat a statement and when your subconscious mind agrees with it then all of the nerves and muscles work normally and the arm stays straight and strong. If, on the other hand, the subconscious disagrees with the statement then there is a momentary lapse in nerve function due to the confusion or disagreement between conscious and subconscious. This hesitation translates into a weaker arm muscle and your arm "unlocks" and goes down when pushed by the facilitator. It's a primitive, binary communication system but it offers amazing insight into the subconscious mind. Issues you don't have a problem with in your conscious mind can turn out to be major problems on the subconscious level.

The PSYCH-K facilitator normally uses a variety of Belief Statements to isolate a problem belief by a process of elimination. Once exposed there are several types of Balances used to reprogram the belief to support your best life.

Tyler: Our reviewer, Cherie Fisher, mentioned that Network Spinal Analysis is included, a type of chiropractic touch to heal. What might be the benefit of this therapy for people?

Alan: NSA is built on a chiropractic foundation, but it's used to release stress from the body so it can be adjusted, balanced and begin to heal itself. Many people talk about experiencing intense feelings during a session, like reliving and releasing emotional traumas resulting from the death of a loved one. By releasing the tension that's been held in the body, the spine can be adjusted and health problems corrected.

Tyler: Why did you feel the need to write "UnBreak Your Health"?

Alan: The simple answer is that I knew from personal experience that somebody had to do it. I know I'm not the most medically qualified person to write a book like this, but I sure know what it's like to be a person with health problems that doctors don't know how to fix. I've tried to create the book I wanted when I ran out of options. I know what it's like to hit a brick wall, when you suddenly appreciate the old adage, "without health, nothing else matters." You trust the doctors to walk on water and to heal everything, but they don't and they can't.

Where do you turn? What do I do now? How do I even start to find answers? When you've been in that situation you know what it feels like and know what people need. They want a wide variety of information but they don't want a lot of it. They want the USA Today version, an easy-to-read summary and directions to begin finding their own healing path. They want website links so they can continue researching the therapies that attract them and may hold promise for their problems.

Most of all, they want hope. They need to hear that even when doctors say there isn't anything more they can do, that doesn't mean there isn't anything more that can be done! I hope that "UnBreak Your Health" offers hope to everyone.

Tyler: Alan, what makes “UnBreak Your Health” stand out from the other books on holistic medicine and alternative therapies, such as Lipton’s “Biology of Belief” that led you to alternative therapies?

Alan: Bruce’s book was about the science and it’s wonderful, but as a cellular biologist he didn’t cover any answers. His one mention of PSYCH-K was buried at the very end of his book. The good news is that his state-of-the-art science adds credibility to therapies people don’t understand or appreciate yet.

First of all, “UnBreak Your Health” is the most complete collection of complementary and alternative therapies ever published. It has no diet or supplement listings, it’s all about therapies, and with over 300 in 136 different categories, it’s got a lot to offer.

Second, it’s different because it doesn’t offer disease listings in the Index. People actually have to take responsibility for their own health and read the whole book. My publisher and I nearly parted company over this issue because he said successful health books always had listings in the Index. My goal isn’t money or success but to help people find better health and better lives so they need to learn how to open their own health combination locks. I was willing to take the chance on being different and somehow I managed to convince my publisher to go along with it.

Third, it has comments from users of the therapies so readers can get an idea of what it feels like and what it really does. Those are the biggest differences and I hope advantages of my book.

Tyler: What did you find to be your biggest challenge in writing this book?

Alan: Strangely enough the most difficult part was finding testimonials for each therapy. I wanted to add a little human color to the black-and-white definitions and descriptions but it turned out to be quite a challenge.

Tyler: Why do you think that is? Are people shy about discussing their health problems, or just admitting they used non-conventional remedies?

Alan: Many of the testimonials in the book came from national organizations. While they want to promote their therapy they don’t want to cross the line into the minefield either. It’s the problem of people not wanting to attract the attention of the AMA and mainstream medical-industrial system. They want to exist under the radar because the history of complementary and alternative medicine is filled with stories with very sad endings when people tried to bring new types of healing to the world. That would mean taking business away from the existing medical system which doesn’t let go easily. Remember this is the group that took ten years to accept the research from Australia that ulcers were caused by bacteria. It’s no wonder people in complementary and alternative healing don’t want to become connected to such dangerous activities even in this day and age.

Tyler: Alan, if people are skeptical about these non-conventional medicine types of therapies, what reassurance can you offer them?

Alan: It’s fascinating that people can be apprehensive about therapies that have been used successfully for hundreds if not thousands of years but feel completely safe taking a new drug that has almost no large-scale track record of safety whatsoever. So many of the treatments being used

by conventional medicine have never been properly tested in double-blind research studies and the range of therapies for the same condition across the country can be absolutely scary. Right now I'm reading Shannon Brownlee's new book "OVERTREATED—Why Too Much Medicine is Making Us Sicker and Poorer" and her research into mainstream medicine today presents a frightening picture. Yet this is the medicine that most people feel safe with!

By comparison most of the CAM therapies have evolved by trial and error. In other words, they're around today because they work. Now the caveat here is that while every therapy in my book will work for someone, nothing in the book will work for everyone. The same can be said for prescription drugs, while they help many they can literally kill others.

Tyler: In considering an alternative therapy, what caution should people have? How does someone know if a therapy is legitimate or just a scam?

Alan: First of all you have to realize that anything that can be a catalyst for your own healing, even if it's just switching on your placebo effect, is a valuable therapy. That's why some of the craziest things still produce amazing results for some people. My advice is always to check out the national organizations, read the books that are available on almost every therapy and learn about the technique. Ask around and see what experiences others have had with it. Even if the process is legitimate you also need to check out your local practitioner's qualifications. Just as there are good doctors and bad doctors, the same applies in the CAM world. If you take the time to do a little research, you'll either get a comfort level with the process or you'll want to walk away from it. It's when we jump off the cliff without checking how deep the water is that we get into trouble.

Tyler: I understand the response to the book has already been phenomenal. Will you tell us a little bit about the book's history since publication and what you attribute its success to?

Alan: Since I'm a new author I don't really know if the response has been phenomenal, but I know my publisher seems to be happy at this point. I started doing radio interviews even before the book was available to start spreading the word that there is hope out there. I guess the subject is interesting to people because I keep getting radio hosts to talk with me. I've got one coming up with KGO radio in San Francisco on January 26th with Joanie Greggains. She has one of the top-rated health programs in the country.

I have to say it's an amazing feeling to have someone respond to an interview. I just did one with Cathy Blythe at KFOR in Lincoln, Nebraska, and when I called one of their local bookstores after the program, the buyer said she'd already had 5 people in looking for the book...within an hour of the program!

On the other hand, I've been very surprised at how the mainstream media ignores anything to do with complementary and alternative therapies. They might do a token story or two once in a while but most of the time it's drugs, drugs and more drugs. They act like they're afraid to give anything CAM credibility or perhaps they're just protecting one of their biggest advertisers. I've contacted dozens of health reporters at newspapers, radio and TV stations across the country in the last few months and like the doctors they cover, the subject is just too far outside their comfort zone. Even the local media here in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area have ignored everything about my book even though I'm a local author, and an award-winner at that. Most of them wouldn't even accept a free copy of the book. It just shows we have a long way to go in this country to open eyes and minds.

Tyler: Thank you, Alan, for joining me today. Before we go, will you tell us about your website and what additional information might be found there about “UnBreak Your Health”?

Alan: Absolutely! The website for the book is easy to remember since it’s the name of the book, it’s www.unbreakyourhealth.com. Your readers will find reviews, radio interviews and links to every therapy included in the book. As I said, this is simply the place to start a journey toward better health, not the end.