For the past several years I have taught a practice building and management course for the Lotus Institute of Integrative Medicine. My goal was to help acupuncturists grow a thriving practice. However, it has become clear that without exceptional results, all the marketing and management techniques in the world do not matter: you must produce results!

I am not talking about mediocre or average results. I am talking about dramatic, lasting results. Many of you question whether or not this is actually possible. I assure you, it is. The following is just a small sampling of the many patient testimonials my clinic has received:

“I was having cluster headaches. The medication I was prescribed wasn’t stopping the headaches for more than a couple of hours and costing close to $1000 a week. I was at the point where you would try anything to stop the pain. My wife suggested I look into acupuncture.

My first treatment I could feel the difference. I went in with a cluster and they were able to stop the pain and headache. I was taught several different pressure points that I could use to control the clusters.

I have been going through treatments for about a month now and have been headache free for three weeks of that time. They have helped my pain from arthritis in my hands, lower back, neck and knees.

Last but not least is that after smoking for 42 years I am now smoke free and am feeling better than I have for years.”

James A., Poulsbo, WA
"I have had low back pain for most of my life. Between the sports related injuries and the car accidents, low back pain became a daily norm. I had seen chiropractors, MDs, PAs, Orthos and everyone in between.

I met Bob at a Silverdale Chamber lunch. After feeling my radial pulse for only a few minutes, Bob said “I can fix you”, and he has. After 4 weeks of treatments, my back pain is almost completely gone. I have had more pain free days in the past few weeks than the past year. Thanks to everyone at the clinic!"

Michael G., Silverdale, WA

“Since starting acupuncture and Chinese herbal treatments I have been treated for many chronic joint pains. I have also had two rather major injuries to my shoulder and lower back.

At this time all of my pains have been greatly diminished and I am currently 95% better in all areas.”

Eloise A., Silverdale, WA

How are these results possible? I truly believe it is because I use a distal method of acupuncture in my clinic. This method, known as the Balance Method, was taught to me by Richard Tan, O.M.D., and it has not failed me clinically for over 12 years.

Over these past years Dr. Tan’s method has become more popular and it is now uncommon for a practitioner to have never heard of it. The problem seems to be that since most practitioners are not taught this method in school, there is a rather large intimidation factor in learning the imaging associated with this technique.

Now why am I lecturing about this technique? Because of the sheer number of patients I have treated using this method. To date I have conducted in excess of 150,000 patient treatments using this method exclusively. By any standard that is an enormous number of treatments, and our clinical success cannot be denied.

In the “Treatment of Pain” class, I explain the common misconceptions regarding how acupuncture works. If you cannot explain this medicine in a way that the average person can understand, you will find that they never really garner a true belief in what you do and how you are helping them to heal. Creating an image of yourself as an “energy” healer puts you in a place of mysticism, and not a scientifically supported medical practitioner.
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I also explain the technical aspects of acupuncture’s effects on the body, so that you will have the confidence to not only discuss this medicine with your patients, but with western medical doctors as well.

It is imperative, I believe, for one to have a physiological understanding of acupuncture so that we know how distal needles work and how they effectively eliminate pain, as well as keep it away. Local needles do work, but so do distal needles. Clinically I have found that distal needles work faster, better, and achieve a longer lasting result than local needles.

In order to feel pain, or to have our brains register a pain signal, there needs to be 2 signals hitting the midbrain. The sensory nerves, called nociceptor fibers, provide one and position nerves, called proprioceptive fibers, provide the other. The nociceptors produce the pain signal itself and the position nerves tell the brain where the pain is emanating from. Both nerve fibers are firing simultaneously at the sight of the injury or problem. Both nerves travel up the dorsal, lateral horn of the spine. Both hit the midbrain at about the same time. If everything is working right, after receiving these pain signals, the brain is supposed to release the body’s painkillers, called enkephalins. These are strong opioids and are designed to plug up the pain receptor sites in the brain, all along the spine, and on the capillary beds where the pain is emanating from. For those people who have chronic pain, this mechanism is obviously not working. Since one could define chronic pain as pain which no longer has a purpose, it is surprising that a patient can go for years suffering from chronic pain, when the body is genetically designed to stop pain when it no longer serves a purpose. The question arises, why has the body forgotten to use its painkilling mechanisms?

I explain in my class in detail this specific, scientific knowledge of the actions and effects of needling a patient. And this will enable you to have confidence in your ability as a medical healer to explain how this medicine works.

I will also teach you the imaging methods that we use, the points used to treat specific areas of pain, as well as how to include herbal therapy for a complete healing regimen.

My clinic, the Acupuncture and Wellness Center, is believed by many experts in the field to be the largest volume private Chinese Medical clinic in the United States. We routinely treat 500 to 600 people each week, and have been doing so for over 6 years. This large volume of patients has allowed us to gain a great deal of insight into mastering Dr. Tan’s system and making it work the majority of the time. It will be my pleasure to spend some time explaining exactly how we treat all aspects of upper and lower body pain. I hope this will help all of you who strive for excellence in this wonderful medicine.
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About the Author
Robert Doane, L.Ac.

Robert Doane, M.S., L.Ac. and his wife, Anne, started the Acupuncture & Wellness Center, P.S. in Poulsbo, WA, in 1998. The clinic rapidly became the largest private Chinese medical clinic in the State of Washington. Robert holds a Master of Oriental Medicine, is NCCAOM certified in both Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine, and is licensed to practice acupuncture in the State of Washington. He has lectured extensively on health throughout India, Europe, and the United States. Robert Doane has a passion for sharing keys to practice building with as many practitioners as possible, and to advance the effectiveness and visibility of TCM.

***Robert Doane has an ongoing residency-training program of 3 years duration in his clinic. Its purpose is to train acupuncturists in both their medical techniques and business model so that they can be successful anywhere in the world. His clinic offers the opportunity for each intern to treat 40 to 50 people per day continuously. With this kind of experience it is virtually impossible not to become very good at Chinese Medicine. If you are interested in their residency training, visit them on their website at www.acupuncturewellness.net

For more courses available by the author, visit www.elotus.org