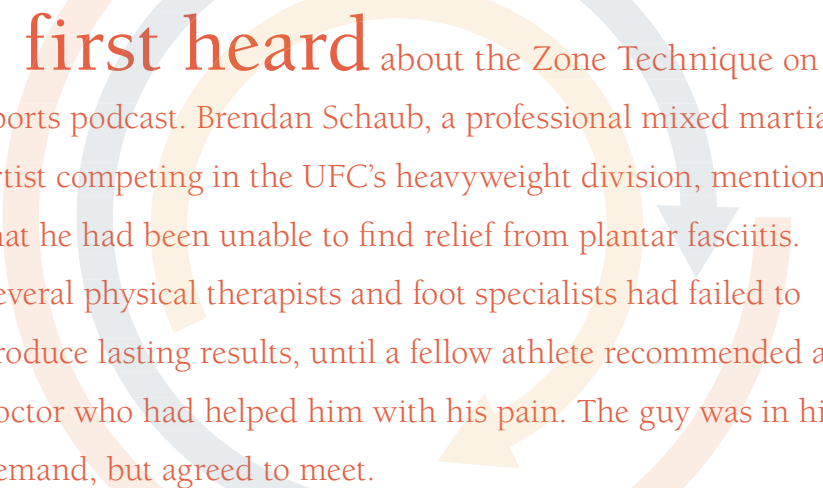


The background features a central blue silhouette of a human figure. Surrounding the figure are stylized illustrations of various organs: a red brain at the top left, a yellow and blue heart at the top right, blue lungs with a yellow trachea on the left, two blue kidneys with red interiors on the right, a yellow liver at the bottom left, and a coiled yellow and red intestine at the bottom right. All elements have long, soft shadows cast to the right.

The Zone Technique

Balancing the Body's Systems

BY
BRANDON TWYFORD



I first heard

about the Zone Technique on a sports podcast. Brendan Schaub, a professional mixed martial artist competing in the UFC's heavyweight division, mentioned that he had been unable to find relief from plantar fasciitis. Several physical therapists and foot specialists had failed to produce lasting results, until a fellow athlete recommended a doctor who had helped him with his pain. The guy was in high demand, but agreed to meet.

Schaub described the encounter as odd, to say the least. He arrived at a sprawling mansion in Beverly Hills, California—the home of a fellow patient. The doctor only spent 10 minutes on him, from initial assessment to the end of treatment. Schaub had gone into the session skeptically, and this short treatment did little to assuage his doubts. But as he walked to his car, he realized his foot pain was considerably reduced. After two additional sessions, it was gone.

In describing the treatment, Schaub said the doctor first examined his head, checking for tender areas. Next, he worked specific points on Schaub's spine, which he said corresponded to the imbalanced zones in Schaub's body, and then worked briefly on Schaub's foot. Schaub said it felt similar in some ways to chiropractic

treatments, but was fundamentally different from chiropractic adjustments he had received in the past.

As someone interested in all types of bodywork, I was intrigued. Was this indeed a chiropractic technique or was it something different? I reached out to Schaub on Twitter and asked if he could give me any more information. He quickly put me in touch with chiropractor Peter Goldman.

Goldman's impressive roster of clients includes NFL quarterbacks, professional hockey players, champion Ironman triathletes, and world champion mixed martial artists. He's even worked with legendary sumo wrestler Akebono, the first non-Japanese wrestler to achieve the title of *yokozuna*, sumo's highest rank. A Brazilian jiu jitsu black belt himself, Goldman has a deep

understanding of the human body and the unique bodywork needs of professional athletes.

What sort of work was this guy doing that had top-level athletes singing his praises? It's called the Zone Technique, and it can be employed effectively by bodyworkers of all types, including craniosacral therapists, massage therapists, and reiki practitioners.

ORIGINS OF THE MODALITY

The Zone Technique was created in 1931 by Thurman Fleet, DC. The philosophy behind this technique is similar to that of craniosacral therapy (CST): to balance the body's systems so it is better able to heal itself. Like CST, the Zone Technique can be used as a stand-alone therapy or as a complement to other modalities.

It is based on the belief that there are six zones, or systems, within the human body, and that all aches, pains, diseases, and other discomforts in the body are the result of disturbances in one or more of these six zones. Each zone has a corresponding brain center and point along the spine. The practitioner locates the imbalanced zones on a client's head and then stimulates the corresponding point or points along the client's spine.

The stimulation of the zones can be as gentle as the light touch of a reiki practitioner or as strong as the deep palpation of a sports massage therapist—it all depends on the practitioner's skill level and training.

BALANCING THE BODY

Goldman was raised in a family that believed in holistic health and wellness. "We ate organic food before most people even knew what that was," he says. "Our health-care professionals were a chiropractor, a homeopath, and a naturopath,

and that's it. So I was always in tune with natural health and healing." From an early age, Goldman knew he wanted to be a healer of some type. He earned an economics degree in college, but later decided to enroll in chiropractic school.

"When I arrived at school, I was curious why what they were teaching was so limited, compared to the chiropractic work I had grown up with. I called my family chiropractor and asked him why his healing results were so much better than what I was being exposed to in school. He told me that he had learned a technique called the Zone Technique from Dr. Thurman Fleet in San Antonio, Texas." Goldman researched Fleet and the Zone Technique, and found a chiropractor near him who had also been a student of Fleet. Goldman contacted the practitioner and spent the



Creator of the Zone Technique, Thurman Fleet, DC. *Image courtesy www.concept-therapy.org.*

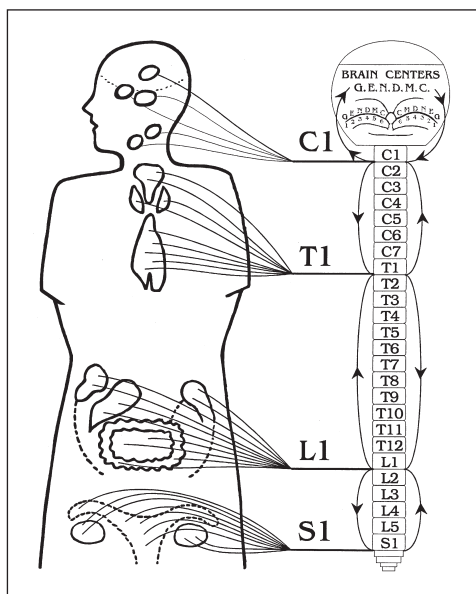
majority of his four years in chiropractic school learning the Zone Technique alongside his standard chiropractic training.

Goldman started using the technique in 1993. The results were so profound that many of his fellow colleagues, and even some of his chiropractic teachers, started seeing Goldman for their own treatment and asked to learn the technique from him.

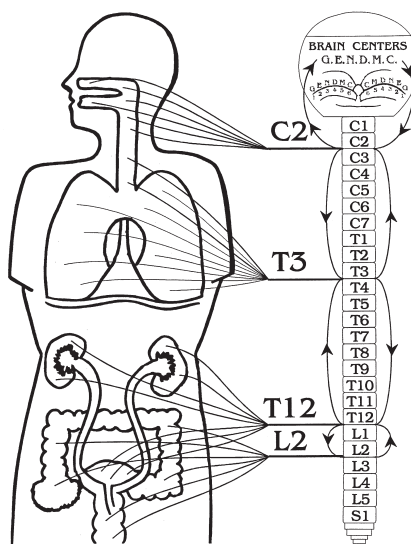
Goldman believes the technique is as effective as it is because it "does not treat symptoms; it balances the systems of the body so that the body can heal. Then the symptoms just go away."

Another aspect of the Zone Technique that makes it especially appealing to a wide range of bodyworkers is its adaptability for inclusion into other modalities. Nearly any technique can be used in conjunction with the Zone Technique—acupuncture, energy work, neuromuscular, reiki, and sports massage are just a few of the bodywork modalities

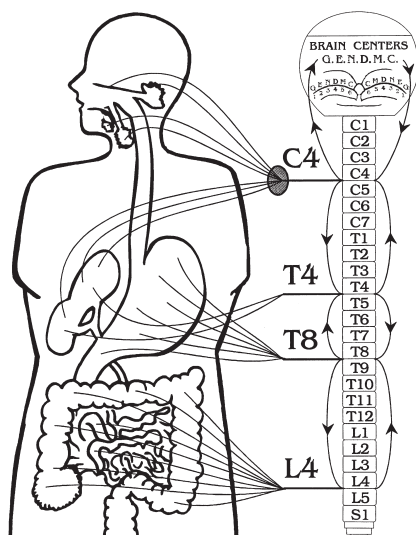
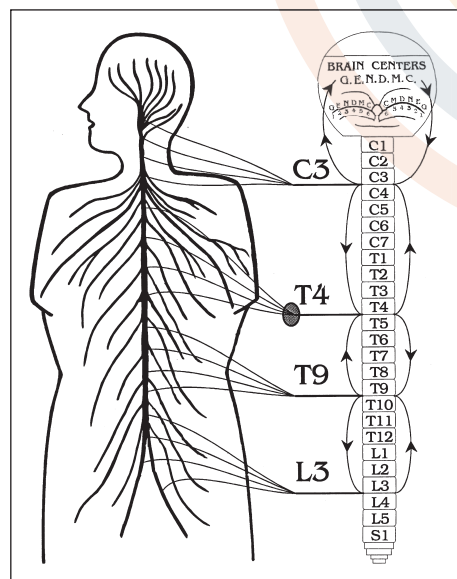
1 Glandular zone (C1)



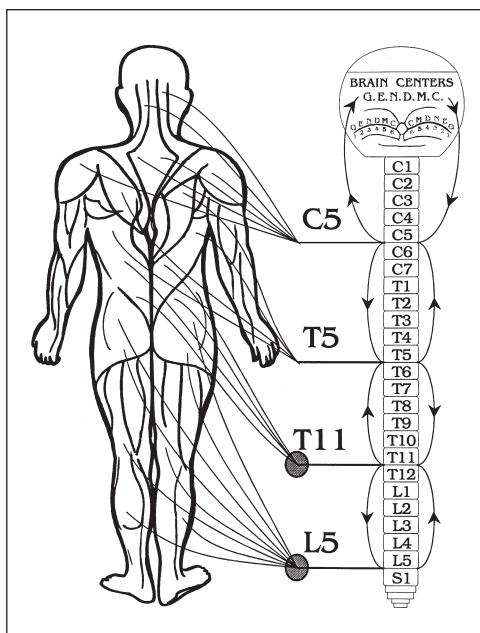
2 Eliminative zone (C2)



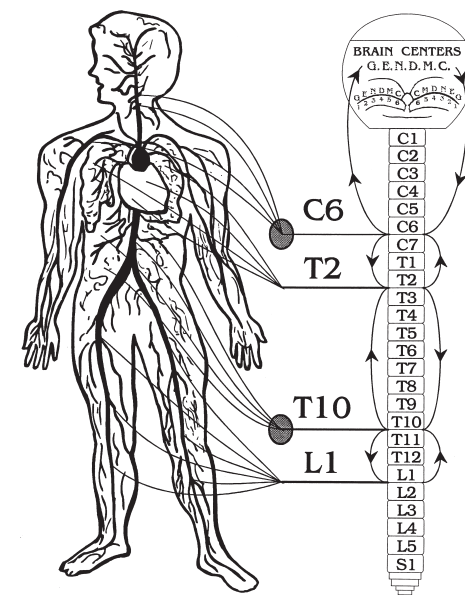
3 Nervous zone (C3)



4 Digestive zone (C4)



5 Muscular zone (C5)



6 Circulatory zone (C6)

Goldman has been represented at the seminars he teaches. “I love results, so any healing modality that gets great results is cool with me. Anything that helps to balance the body in a natural way can be of benefit,” he says.

USING THE ZONE TECHNIQUE

Being trained by an expert is the best way to learn the Zone Technique, but Goldman offers a basic technique of assessment and treatment that can be used by any bodyworker immediately. Stimulate the tissue only to the degree you are comfortable with, in line with your training, and always exercise caution when working near the spine.

1. Palpate the cervical spine of the client, specifically C1 through C6.
2. Locate which cervical spinal level is most fixated and tender:
 - C1 corresponds to the glandular system. Imbalance here may manifest as problems with concentration, memory, sleep, or the immune system (Image 1).
 - C2 corresponds to the eliminative system. Imbalance here may manifest as problems with urination, bowel movements, skin, or sinuses (Image 2).
 - C3 corresponds to the nervous system. Imbalance here may manifest as problems with relaxation, mood, appetite, hormones, or nervousness (Image 3).
 - C4 corresponds to the digestive system. Imbalance here may manifest as problems with the appetite, digestion, elimination, weight, or energy (Image 4).

- C5 corresponds to the muscular system. Imbalance here may manifest as problems with sore muscles, equilibrium, spinal alignment, strength, or movement (Image 5).
- C6 corresponds to the circulatory system. Imbalance here may manifest as problems with blood pressure, circulation, relaxation, or the heart (Image 6).

3. When you have determined which system requires balancing, stimulate the following points along the spine, in this order:

- Glandular system: C1, T1, L1, S1
- Eliminative system: C2, T3, T12, L2
- Nervous system: C3, T4, T9, L3
- Digestive system: C4, T4, T8, L4
- Muscular system: C5, T5, T11, L5
- Circulatory system: C6, T2, T10, L1

You can stimulate these points in any way you like. For example, energy workers might hold their hands or fingers on each of these four points, one by one, for about 10 seconds each. A massage therapist might gently palpate the tissue immediately surrounding each point.

The point that should get the highest degree of stimulation is usually the appropriate cervical point—the exception being when the digestive system is targeted. In this case, the most stimulated points should be T4 and T8.

According to Goldman, when the correct points along the spine are properly stimulated in the correct order, energy is sent up the spinal cord to the brain and resets the brain centers that control these systems. This creates balance in the client’s body.


Goldman stresses that the most important factors for finding and maintaining good health are awareness of the mind-body connection, exercise, proper diet, and rest.

GETTING RESULTS

A common thread among Goldman’s clients is the incredible results they see in just a few, very brief, sessions. Veteran NFL quarterback Bruce Gradkowski of the Pittsburgh Steelers says, “The treatments may be fast, but they are very effective. That’s what makes [Goldman] the best.”

I asked Goldman how he’s able to achieve these dramatic results in such a short amount of time. “Done right, the Zone Technique just takes a couple of minutes,” he says. “Once the brain is sending proper signals to the cells of the body, healing can occur very efficiently.”

Since the Zone Technique can be used in as gentle or active a manner as the practitioner desires, it’s an extremely adaptable modality that any practitioner, regardless of experience or skill level, can learn the basics of and start using on clients right away. However, Goldman says that while the basic aspects of the Zone Technique can be learned quickly to become valuable additions to any bodyworker’s skill set, after 21 years using the technique, he’s still learning and getting better. **m&b**

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