

H A R L A N   R I C H A R D S

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Acupressure - Fact or Fantasy?

Acupressure is essentially acupuncture without the needles. The premise is that there are energy channels throughout the body and many health problems are caused by interruptions in the flow of energy throughout the body. Using gentle pressure at specific points on a body can eliminate or ease physical symptoms.

I recently came across a book on acupressure called Acupressure's Potent Points, by Micheal Reed Gach and decided to read up on the subject to see what I could learn. I was skeptical - there's no way merely pressing on different parts of your body can accomplish anything. I mean it has to be one of the most ridiculous things I ever heard. But I still resolved to try it out. Who knows, maybe it does help a little. It can't hurt, anyway.

For my first experiement I did acupressure on my ankle. I have a decades-old injury that causes me severe, almost constant pain when I walk. The only thing that has ever helped is to eat lots of ibuprofin - something I refuse to do because of the adverse effects on my digestive tract and organs. I am essentially in pain every day, every time I walk (I can't run at all because of the deterioration in my ankle).

There are four pressure points - two on each side of the ankle. I spent a couple of minutes applying gentle pressure on those points. My decades-old ankle pain melted away! Unbelievable! From one treatment I reduced the pain by 90%. Over a few days I continued to periodically apply acupressure. From a state of almost constant pain, I am now mostly pain-free. Every time my ankle starts bothering me, I do a couple of minutes of acupressure and it clears right up. Amazing. My cell mate tells me it's all psychosomatic - all in my head. I respond, I don't care what it is as long as it works.

My success made me wonder if it was an anomaly or if all acupressure procedures in the book were valid. I have a terrible time sleeping. Prison beds are uncomfortable and I wake up frequently, sometimes laying awake for hours, unable to get back to sleep. I tried acupressure the next time I woke up and couldn't get back to sleep. It worked! I still wake up at night but now I do acupressure and go right back to sleep.

My next experiment will be on my occasional sinus headaches. If you have any minor ailments, give acupressure a try. I worked for me and might work for you.