

## Chris' Healing Journey

### G-F-Chris

For those of you who do not know me personally, I want to share a piece of my past with you. The reason that I am doing this is so that you will understand exactly what brought me to the place where I am now. My current good health was one those things that was difficult to fully attain, even from an early age.

My challenges started a few weeks after my birth when my mother fed me barley cereal, as was recommended by my pediatric physician. Within a couple of days after eating the barley cereal, I began crying regularly, and was projectile vomiting, a few days later I started to have bloody stools. (My mother remembers this vividly because it occurred on the weekend that President Kennedy was assassinated.) After my severe reaction, my mother immediately backed off and with guidance from my pediatrician placed me on a soy-milk formula. Although, I was still vomiting after eating the soy formula, the intestinal bleeding stopped and I began to gain weight and grow again. They kept me on soy until I was able to eat solid foods.

Throughout my childhood and teen years I suffered with all types of allergies. I was tested by an allergist around age eight and placed on allergy shots until my late teens. Still, I functioned relatively well and was a happy, active boy.

Around the age of 13, I had a root canal on one of my front teeth. *Little did I know how big of an impact it would become on my future health!* Initially I seemed okay, but a year later, I started to experience digestive issues, with lots of bloating and gas. At the time, medications were used to shut off the symptoms. While I was still frequently bloated and gassy, I was not concerned about these symptoms. I just thought that all guys my age had gas, and for the most part I seemed fine.

At the age of 21, I began having severe joint pain in multiple joints; at the time my doctor concluded that it was just tendonitis. However, the pain stopped me from working out for about a year and a half. I was very frustrated during this time, and feared that my physical activity would forever be very limited. Out of desperation, I began looking for something to reduce my joint pain.

After a little research, I decided to try acupuncture. The acupuncture treatments, along with icing my joints, brought my pain under control, so I was able to return to exercising and resume my normal way of living. I now had to ice down my knees and elbows after each workout. This was

not a big deal to me as I could resume all of my normal activities, and I thought that the joint pain would eventually go away.

Three years later, in May of 1989, my pain expanded to several other areas including: my back, neck, shoulder, pelvic, tailbone, and urethra. This pain was much more intense than the joint pain, and I had trouble sleeping and sitting. I felt best standing, but this is not possible twenty-four hours a day. This happened at a time that was actually very joyous for me in a number of ways. I had just graduated from college and had been offered the job I most coveted as a claims executive with Amica Mutual Insurance. I accepted the job, but was worried that I might not be able to go to the orientation and training because I was so sick and in so much pain.

However, the opportunity was too good to pass up and I did improve enough to allow me to attend their training in Providence, Rhode Island. I was then sent to work in their Syracuse, New York branch, away from everyone that I knew. Still, I was determined to make it work. During the next couple of years I saw multiple doctors who ran all sorts of tests. This included a Urologist, who ran a tube up my urethra and into my bladder where he saw redness, swelling and prostatitis. Fun stuff!!! Likewise, multiple drugs and medications were used to try and correct these issues or at least reduce the symptoms. Nothing seemed to help much, as virtually every area of my body started to develop pain. In fact, with each new medication new symptoms were popping up. This went on for a long, agonizing two years.

One day at a bookstore, in 1991, my supervisor with Amica, Frank Carnevale, brought a book to my attention, the name of the book was, *The Yeast Syndrome*. (Thank you, Frank!) Reading the book was an eye opening experience that brought me into a totally different direction with my life. The book described candida/yeast and the symptoms that people have when they have this type of imbalance. *(It should be noted that anti-candida diets in the beginning stages are free of wheat, gluten, sugar, dairy, fermented foods, carbohydrate rich vegetables like potatoes and beans, caffeine, food additives, and alcohol, and as a result, may be an excellent starting point for some chronically ill individuals. Discuss this with your doctor.)* While reading the book, I noticed that I had the vast majority of symptoms associated with this imbalance. So I immediately started the diet that was described in the book, and within a couple of days I noticed a significant reduction of some of my symptoms. I cannot put into words how excited I was, at last I knew that I had found some answers to my health issues. My pain was still intense, but clearly less.

I knew that I needed someone who specializes in this area to give me some guidance. So I found a natural health medical doctor, Sherry Rogers, MD. Dr. Rogers helped me a quite a bit, I learned a lot about natural healing,

nutrition, and dietary supplements from her. It was knowledge that I still use today, not only personally but also professionally as well. Dr. Rogers also ran lots of tests that were different from the tests that the other doctors had used. Multiple issues were now found from: leaky gut syndrome and irritable bowel, to unhealthy microorganisms, to yeast sensitivity, and heavy metal toxicity.

*\* One interesting note here is that most of these painful and unrelenting symptoms were actually coming from issues in my gastrointestinal tract. Amazingly, I did not really think I had any abdominal pain except for my small intestine which, at the time, I thought was coming entirely from my pelvic area.*

One huge mistake we (Dr. Rogers and I) made during this time was moving me from the anti-candida (high protein, low carbohydrate diet) to trying a macrobiotic diet. It is a vegan diet (free of meat and dairy products) designed around whole grain foods. As you might guess, vegetarian diets focused on whole grains are not a good choice for someone with gluten sensitivity. However, at that point (summer of 1991), I was not certain that I was gluten sensitive. I was still just searching and guessing what next step I should take to move ahead.

Dr. Rogers had warned me not to be alarmed if I started to lose weight on the macrobiotic diet. She said it was to be expected, but was thinking around fifteen to twenty pounds for me. So when I started to lose weight, I did not allow myself to get caught up in it. In fact, to prevent myself from freaking out too much, I decided that I would not look at myself in a full-length mirror, only from the chest up.

During this time I noticed that my clothes were falling off of me, my friends and co-workers were telling me that I was getting too thin. However, I told them that I was on a special diet and I knew what I was doing. Or so I thought! They all thought I was crazy, but I had not told them how much pain I was living with and how difficult life was for me. I was simply willing to do anything that could possibly help me.

However, over the next fourteen months my pain gradually increased to where I was before starting the anti-candida diet. I had headaches so severe that I thought my head would explode. My back and neck were also in constant pain, like someone had rammed several ice picks into my vertebrae and left them stuck in my spine. But yet maybe the most intense was my pelvic and buttocks pain. The pelvic pain was awful if I opened my legs outward more than a few inches; I felt extreme agony in my pelvic region that would then shoot down my legs. The buttocks pain I later determined was a result of my colon becoming so inflamed that when I would sit down felt like I was sitting on a knife. Ouch!!!

There were many more horrible symptoms that I had to deal with like: brain fog, severe urethritis, chemical sensitivity, continuing joint pain, thrush on my tongue, and bloody stools, to name a few. The combination of this pain was hard to live with, but something inside of me knew that I would eventually get well.

In fact, I had also become very driven to prove the initial doctors that I had seen for my numerous issues to be wrong. One in particular had told me in no uncertain terms that I was going to have to live with the pain. This infuriated me to no end, so I was going to get well and show this jerk how little he knew. Anger can, at times, be strong motivating factor!

In spite of my best efforts with the macrobiotic diet, my health had clearly reverted backward. The reason that I stuck with this so long was because I wanted to give it every chance to work as I had convinced myself that this was the vehicle for me get well. The results though were obvious when fourteen months into the macrobiotic diet I had gone from one hundred and thirty-five pounds to one hundred and five pounds. (At the time of my college graduation, I weighed one hundred and forty-five pounds.)

My body was virtually starving to death, but I had read so much about the macrobiotic diet helping people, I kept thinking that I must be doing something wrong. So I just kept trying to get it right. If I just would get the combination right, then it would work for me too. At least, that was my thinking at the time.

During this period when I was at my lowest weight, I decided to see how I looked, so I disrobed in front of a full-length mirror. I will never forget how I looked that day. My body was just skin and bones; I could see just about every single bone in my body. It was horrifying!

In late August of 1992, I was getting weaker and weaker and felt like I was dying. I had not seen Dr. Rogers for several months, but when she learned how far I had gone down, she immediately recommended that I go back on the high protein, candida-free diet, which I was earlier on.

Overnight I started to improve and within about six months I had gained back about twenty pounds. This still left me weighing around one hundred and twenty five pounds and in pain. However, the pain was a lot less intense, and a few of the minor symptoms that had cropped up while following the macrobiotic diet went away.

Ever since that time I have overwhelmingly lived a gluten-free existence. In spite of our transgressions, I learned a great deal from Dr. Rogers and

am very grateful for all of her help. However, over the next several years I failed to progress further, and it became obvious that something more was needed, to improve my health.

I had virtually no idea of what direction to go in next, yet I instinctively knew that there was something out there that would enable me to reach my peak level of health. In fact, there are always new health products emerging to assist people in their recovery. So never think that you have already tried everything, due to the large number of endless new products you can virtually never try everything. With this in mind, you can never allow yourself to get too discouraged there is always reason for at least some level of hope. For as Winston Churchill said, "Never, ever give up!"

The one scary thing that I experienced after returning to the high protein, low carbohydrate was the time that I tried eating brown rice cereal. After eating it my gastrointestinal region was in so much pain that it took six weeks to get back to where I felt before eating it. To the best of my recollection I do not remember passing blood in my stools after eating the brown rice grain. However, I never did it again. I had learned my lesson!

Over the next several more years, I stumbled around trying different things to help me get to the next level. I had read several times about people with heavy metal issues and problems from root canals. But it all seemed so drastic to me at the time. So I kind ignored those things for awhile, and just chose to keep trying other nutritional supplements and dietary approaches.

I tried many, many different eating approaches, but the one thing that I kept coming back to was the high protein and low carbohydrate eating approach. This will not be the right approach for everyone of course, but it was what worked the best for me.

Then in early 2001, my chiropractor, Marc Behar, in New Orleans told me about (EDS) electrodermal screening, and that I should have the testing done to see what it could find about my health issues. He had already scheduled a salesperson from BioMeridian, one of the top companies that manufacture this testing device, to come into his office and provide some brief testing. I thought "what the heck what have I got to lose?" I really did not expect to gain much from this process after I had done so much before. However, it was truly amazing, when the BioMeridian sales professional, Dawne Torres, provided a brief ten-minute demonstration on me.

Based on the testing results, she was able to pinpoint several areas of my body that were affected. She further added that, according to her test results, that the herbal remedy oil of oregano, which I thought was helping

me, was actually stressing my digestive system. She instead said that her testing equipment found olive leaf extract to be a better fit for me.

I remember going home that night I was a bit skeptical, (after having been disappointed so many other times), but yet still very hopeful. I always maintained my hope! Still I decided to try her suggestions and see for myself. A few days later off the oil of oregano and on the olive leaf extract, I felt a clear noticeable improvement, my energy had increased and my stomach and intestinal region felt more relaxed. I called Dawne and set up a time for a more complete test and told her that if she could help me figure out how I could regain my health, that I would buy one of her systems and become very proficient with it. She was very willing and helpful. (Thanks Dawne!) As you can see I have multiple people to thank for their help along the way.

Dawne worked with me every time she came to town and I continued to show signs of improvement. Within a few months I knew that I had to get one of these testing instruments sooner rather than later. In early October of 2001, I bought one and began learning how to use the Meridian Stress Assessment device. It took several years of training, but I also gained another asset during that time. One of my classmates at those trainings became my wife a few years later. So in many ways, it was a very important and enjoyable period of my life.

My health in early 2002 had stalled. After extensive research and consulting with a couple of top-notch dentists, I decided to proceed with a few dental procedures that I had been avoiding.

These dental procedures included: a root canal removal, cavitation surgeries (jawbone surgery to have dead bone and debris removed), removal and replacement of all eight amalgam fillings to safer non-metal dental fillings, and lots of different nutritional and detoxification protocols. Avoiding all gluten containing foods was also a huge part of the process, and was absolutely necessary for my improvement. This sensitivity still remains, so I continue to avoid all gluten.

Since the summer of 2004, I have been well and living a good quality of life. Virtually all of the other food allergies, joint, back, neck, and pelvic pain, which I had to deal with when I was at my sickest have been gone for years. I also got married in 2004, my wife tries to take full credit, and of course her love did serve a significant role in my recovery as well. (Thank you, Debbie!) Not to mention, my parents, whose unending love and support kept me focused on the goal of full recovery all along the way. (Thank you, Mom and Dad!)

The other main ingredient to my success was my faith and my choice to look at this healing journey as a great learning experience that was going to enable me to grow personally and develop a closer connection to God. My faith played a crucial role in my recovery, and kept me going in the right direction even when I was not improving. Without this divine connection I can guarantee that my recovery would never have been possible.

The reason for this is simply because I would never have continued looking for an answer to my health issues. I would have just accepted it when my doctors said that there was nothing they could do for me. Thus, in my view, those who are lacking a strong spiritual relationship to God, do not have the best chance for restoring their health. It is imperative that you develop that relationship so that you too can reach your full health potential.

Best wishes to all,

Chris