

Poster presentation

An artist's inquiry into scoliosis: an adult case report

Laura Ferguson

Address: New York, NY, USA

Email: Laura Ferguson - laura@lauraferguson.net

from 4th International Conference on Conservative Management of Spinal Deformities
Boston, MA, USA. 13–16 May 2007

Published: 12 October 2007

Scoliosis 2007, **2**(Suppl 1):P4 doi:10.1186/1748-7161-2-S1-P4

This abstract is available from: <http://www.scoliosisjournal.com/content/2/S1/P4>

© 2007 Ferguson; licensee BioMed Central Ltd.

Objective

To document improved symptoms in a patient who investigated the three-dimensional dynamics of her own spinal curvature through visual imagery.

Study design

Idiopathic scoliosis was diagnosed at age eight years. A T5–T12 spinal fusion with cadaver bone graft, without instrumentation, was performed at age thirteen years (John Cobb, Hospital for Special Surgery, New York, NY, U.S.A). The Cobb angle of the post surgical curve measured eight-five degrees. By age thirty-two years restrictive lung disease, arthritis and spinal stenosis, were diagnosed. The symptoms worsened progressively.

Methods

An exercise program incorporating Alexander Technique, Yoga, Pilates, and neuromuscular training was designed to (1) strengthen and stabilize muscles around hypermobile joints, and (2) improve proprioceptive awareness to allow postural adjustments to improve spinal alignment and symmetry. In collaboration with orthopedists and radiologists, images including a three-dimensional spiral computed tomography scan of the subject's skeleton were made for the purpose of drawing.

Results

Symptom stabilization occurred as the patient gained a more graceful and coherent sense of her body, as well as improved look and function. A series of artworks revealing the three-dimensional spatial dynamic of the scoliotic spine were produced <http://www.lauraferguson.net/>.

Conclusion

Health related quality of life can be improved using movement practices based on these concepts.