

<b>Venue:</b>	Doody's Book Review Service
<b>Title:</b>	Book Review: The placebo effect in manual therapy: improving clinical outcomes in your practice, Brian Fulton
<b>Date:</b>	2015
<b>Type:</b>	Book Review
<b>Author(s)/ Presenter(s):</b>	Joanie Holst
<b>Abstract (or Book Review):</b>	<p><b>Description</b></p> <p>This book approaches the placebo effect as more than just a possibility and discusses its influence on healing in the treatment of soft tissue. It suggests that in addition to hands-on manual treatment, a certain level of healing can also occur without any therapeutic intervention. It further suggests that manual treatments can be enhanced by using methods that will maximize the placebo effect in a patient's healing process. The author cites research evidence to support the ideas he presents.</p> <p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>The stated goal is to help practitioners improve their clinical outcomes by applying lessons learned from placebo trials and other studies. The author believes it is possible to reproduce healing response outcomes in a clinical setting through the careful delivery of the placebo effect. He claims that the insights into the placebo effect will help manual practitioners improve the clinical outcomes of their patients, by augmenting the patients' inner healing system.</p> <p><b>Audience</b></p> <p>The audience is manual therapy practitioners. This book could serve practicing therapists well, but parts of it also could be used in the classroom. It could perhaps be part of the business or practice building portion of a curriculum, reinforcing that part of clinical success will be in the outcomes achieved with patients.</p> <p><b>Features</b></p> <p>This book looks beyond the hands-on application of skills to anything that can improve patients' conditions, such as the office environment, the treatment room, the exchange of words, interactions between therapist and patient, as well as the belief patterns and conditioning of the patient. Part 1 of the book's three parts focuses on understanding the placebo effect and includes a historical perspective and background information. It</p>

explores the nature of belief patterns and body-mind medicine. The second part, which is considered the practical application part, discusses factors that assist the body's healing process beyond the therapeutic encounter. Concepts that have been shown to improve a patient's response to treatment include motivation, desire, trust, listening, etc. The book then discusses ways for practitioners to put these theories into practice. The final part takes a broader look at healing and focuses more on readers' ideas about healing. Readers may find that this section challenges their existing paradigm about healing. The author comments that this section is not an integral part of the book, rather just some additional thoughts. The two questions he poses involve where the placebo response goes from here and quantum healing. The author admits to having no expertise at all in these areas, so the chapter is quite short and merely poses these questions to stimulate further thought.

### **Assessment**

I would guess that all of us working as manual therapists know that much more happens in our treatment sessions than just the hands-on skills that we deliver. I like the fact that this book includes research that verifies that practitioners are also a symbol of health and healing for our patients and that, in turn, increases their hope and trust about the outcome of the clinical encounter. That in itself is the placebo effect. The book ends with a list of suggested readings for those wishing more information as well as ideas about how to develop a stronger social support system.