

# And They Said It Wasn't Possible

Karen R. Hurd

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Praise for  
*And They Said It Wasn't Possible*

What a fascinating book! It is so refreshing to have a caring health care professional really explain how we are harming ourselves. To understand the “why” we need to improve our nutrition helps us make the changes needed to heal and remain healthy.

*Jeanne K. Mittelstadt, M.D., ACOG, ND for Health Care Providers Gynecology  
Eau Claire, WI*

This book effectively illustrates how simple dietary changes can produce fantastic results, even in chronic “incurable” cases. Karen presents her well-thought-out theories in a manner that is easy to follow and makes perfect sense. She inspires all of us to make better choices.

*Curt Black, Doctor of Chiropractic  
Eau Claire, WI*

*To the Creator who made our bodies in such a  
marvelous fashion.*

## Foreword

Karen Hurd's *And They Said It Wasn't Possible* presents a novel approach to the treatment of inflammatory bowel disease. She expertly lays out a pure dietary and lifestyle approach to controlling these diseases by using case studies to illustrate in layman's terms the logic behind her recommendations. Her explanations are well-reasoned, easy to follow, and enjoyable to read.

I have known Karen for over seventeen years and regularly refer patients from my family practice to her for nutritional counseling concerning a myriad of disorders. She routinely delivers sound, compassionate advice that yields positive results.

Karen truly has a servant's heart and her motivation for writing is to help as many people as possible. This book will give hope and help to thousands of families afflicted by inflammatory bowel disease. The results will speak for themselves.

*Lane Woldum, M.D.*

*Family Practice, Mayo Clinic Health System, Chippewa Falls, WI*

# Preface

The accounts that I have written in this book are true. Each client has reviewed their chapter(s) for accuracy. Some of the names and places may have been changed at the client's request for anonymity. The first account that I have written is detailed with explanations and specific instructions of how to heal from gastro-intestinal disorders and rheumatoid arthritis (Chapters 1 through 12). The remaining chapters relate the stories of other clients without the specific explanations and details as that information has already been covered in the first account.

It is important to note that this work is not intended to discredit or demean the work of medical doctors. That profession is working as hard as I to help people get well. However, as I often say, there are many ways to skin a cat. Know that there is hope. Know that your situation may not truly be impossible.

This is the ebook edition of the original book that was published in 2006. I have made a few changes that include the recommendation for sleep (eight hours versus ten) as well as removing the allowance of sweets once a week that I had originally allowed after the client achieved good health. As I continue to grow in knowledge and experience, I have learned that sugary foods are NEVER good for anyone. All references have been updated to reflect current scientific studies. Other minor changes to make the text flow more smoothly are also incorporated into this edition.

May you have the best possible health!

*Karen Hurd*

*April 2018*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Rheumatoid Arthritis:**

### **The Raising of Its Ugly Head**

Lyn reached behind her and rubbed the small of her back. It gave but little relief. The pain remained and continued to radiate all the way down her tail bone. Lyn sighed and turned her attention back to the computer screen. It had been weeks that she had been hurting, but she had determined that she was going to ignore the constant throbbing. She didn't have time for this type of thing. This project was due soon and if she didn't get it finished her boss would . . . well, it just wouldn't be pretty.

It was almost nine p.m. when she finally pushed away from her desk, got her coat, and walked out to the car. It was a good thing that not many people were left in the building because it was an effort not to limp. She managed to walk past her boss's office without showing any strain, but as soon as she knew he couldn't see her anymore, she gave into the pain. Limping somehow made it easier to walk.

Just getting into the car was difficult because she was so stiff. The winter cold didn't help. But the burning in her tail bone felt like a small fire. Guess pain could have its upside. She shook her head. What I am coming to? Welcoming pain as a heating source? That's stupid.

She started the car and turned on the heat. The air blew out cold. She reached over and turned off the blower, realizing it would be another few minutes before the engine was warm enough to make heating the car worthwhile. As Lyn put the car into reverse and

backed out of the parking space, she wondered how she had gotten to this point. Good grief, she felt like she was ninety years old when she was only twenty-nine!

As she drove home she wondered if stress had anything to do with her stiffness and pain. After leaving Hewitt and taking this job with Abbott her stress levels had increased dramatically. She loved her job here; and she thrived, in one sense. How could stress that she enjoyed make her feel badly?

She had risen to the challenge when she entered the male-dominated environment at Abbott. Everything was fast-paced and high demand. Something resonated within her when she was faced with a difficult situation and she was able to conquer it. She had been like this since she was a child.

Lyn's thoughts turned to the years that she spent in the Reserves—basic training, ROTC, Advanced Camp, and then finally making second lieutenant. There were times she had wanted to quit, times when she was embarrassed that she didn't understand the technical jargon, but she had persisted and won a commission anyway.

But there were some things that she hadn't conquered. Tears stung her eyes as she remembered the years that her mother had fought breast cancer. The up-and-down road of remission and then relapse had torn Lyn apart. Going through that with Mom had been so difficult. Lyn had felt helpless. What could she do to change things? Nothing! Even now it grated. Lyn had always been able to change things. But she wasn't able to change cancer. The tears were flowing down her face now. Lyn wiped them away with the back of her hand. She had to get hold of herself. Mom had been gone for over two years. When would this pain stop? She had pain in her heart because of losing her; she had that blasted throbbing pain in her back. Pain, pain everywhere. Idiotic pain!

Lyn jammed on the brakes as the driver ahead of her decided to make a last minute right-hand turn. Brainless people! Didn't anyone know how to drive in this town? The anger of not being able to change the outcome of her mother's illness made her impatient. Lyn punched down on the accelerator, zooming by the tail end of the car that was making the turn in front of her. It wasn't long before she was home. As she turned off the engine, she realized she had been so upset that she had forgotten to turn on the heater. Oh, well, it didn't matter. She was home now. What did anything matter? She answered herself

aloud as she slammed the door of the car, “Work matters. That’s why I can’t let this fool back of mine bother me.”

Then Lyn suddenly realized—her back wasn’t hurting anymore. Huh. That was funny. “Whatever, at least something good has happened,” Lyn muttered as she marched into the house.

January rolled into February. The fast pace at Abbott continued. Lyn enjoyed her job despite the huge amount of work that it entailed. She excelled in every way. Her bosses were appreciative of her work; she received awards and raises in salary. She was truly happy. There was satisfaction in being recognized for what she did.

But it was stressful. Her whole life had been one big stress. At least now the stress was positive; she was seeing rewards for putting up with the constant strain. Lyn laughed aloud with the next thought. Maybe she was addicted to stress. Without further contemplation, Lyn focused on her work. The executive compensation package had to be finished by tomorrow afternoon. It seemed as if she still had a million phone calls to make before she could finalize the proposals.



Spring of 2003. Where had the time gone? She had been at Abbott for over two years. Lyn looked at her husband Jerry from across the small table where they were seated for a rare meal together. She had actually arrived home early enough to spend the evening with him. Not that she had time to cook a meal, but at least she had picked up a pizza on the way home.

“Can you believe that we have been married for three and a half years?” Lyn asked as she took a bite of a pepperoni-laden piece. Jerry glanced up and acknowledged the statement with a shrug. His mouth was full.

Lyn turned wistful. “I wonder why we haven’t been able to become pregnant. I want to have a baby so badly.”

“Maybe it has to do with your stomach being in knots all the time. They say that stress

has a lot to do with not being able to get pregnant.” Jerry was sympathetic but he also wasn’t hesitant to point out what might be true.

“My stomach *is* in knots all the time. I even have knots in my chest. I’m always thinking, ‘What have I missed, what might have happened, what might I have done wrong?’” Lyn sighed.

“Don’t you see that you’re worrying all the time? I know you love your job, but you fret about it incessantly.”

“I do see, but I don’t know how to change it.” Lyn downed the rest of her soda and stood abruptly. “I think I’ll go to bed early tonight. My tail bone is hurting again. It’s probably all the blasted sitting I do at work.”

The next morning Lyn felt no better. In fact, besides the pain in her lower back, there was something new. Her fingers were swollen and painful. Well, she had ignored her back for so long; she would ignore her fingers, too. She fumbled as she dressed herself, but managed.

It was a dreary spring day. Lyn glanced out of the window of the conference room. She was having a hard time focusing on the matters at hand. The pain in her back and hands—in fact everywhere—was so intense that it took considerable effort not to cry. She would not let anyone see how miserable she was! She plastered a pleasant expression on her face and concentrated on her co-workers’ reports. She would conquer this somehow. She had to.



“You really should see a neurologist or someone.” Jerry hesitated before adding the rest. “You walk funny.” Then he grabbed Lyn’s hands, “And look, your hands are still swollen.”

It was Saturday, and they were seated in the food court at the mall. “I only walk funny because we’ve been tramping around all morning.” Lyn couldn’t stop the defensiveness in her tone.

“But it’s not just today. You’ve been walking like that for several weeks.”

Lyn didn’t bother to argue. He was right. She knew it better than anyone else. Her hip stuck out to one side and everyone had begun to notice it, not just Jerry.

“Alright, I’ll make an appointment with a chiropractor.” It was almost a relief to agree. Maybe someone could help her.



Her appointment was not for another twenty minutes. Lyn had not been to this chiropractor before and was hoping desperately that she could help her. The pain was so intense today that the tears were slipping down her cheeks. Lyn left work earlier than she had to just so she could make it to this appointment on time. A thought struck her. Maybe the chiropractor would take her sooner! The pain was so excruciating she didn’t know if she could wait until it was her turn. She stood up to cross to the receptionist’s counter to ask if it was possible that the doctor take her early—but a popping in her hip froze her to the spot. Waves of nausea rolled over her as pain shot through her body. She didn’t know that anything could hurt this badly.

The receptionist had her back turned, pulling a file from a cabinet. Lyn managed in a croaking voice, “Could the doctor see me early? I’m in a lot of pain.”

The woman didn’t even go check with the doctor. She simply said, “She’s with another patient at the moment. It’ll just be a few more minutes.”

Lyn did not sit down. She didn’t think she could. True to the receptionist’s word, it was only a few more minutes until the door opened and her name was called, but Lyn felt like it was hours. Never in her life had she felt such pain as she felt now. Lyn shuffled into the small room that the receptionist showed her.

The chiropractor’s gentle adjustment did bring some relief. Lyn wasn’t sure what the chiropractor had done, but it had helped. By the time the adjustment was finished, the pain had receded into a dull ache instead of a raging fire. She was so grateful.

Before she left the room the chiropractor said in a calm voice, “You need to consider the possibility that you might have rheumatoid arthritis.”

“What! Impossible. I’m not even thirty.”

“Age doesn’t seem to matter much anymore with arthritis. It used to be that only older people experienced the symptoms, but now younger and younger people are getting it.”

“Humph.” Lyn was not going to believe that. Obviously her hip was out of whack, that was all—otherwise the adjustment would not have helped. “Thanks, doc. Hopefully this will hold, and I won’t have to come back.”

Lyn left the office and hurried to work. She had so much to do there. That report needed to be reworked and her boss expected to see the statistics on the new market analysis study. As Lyn sat at her desk a half hour later, a thought crossed the back of her mind as she immersed herself in the business of the day. What if the chiropractor was right? Lyn pushed the thought away abruptly. She had too much to do right now—she would have to deal with that later—if there was really anything to deal with.

The weekend came and Lyn finally decided to see if she could silence that niggling thought that the chiropractor had planted. After a few hours of research on the internet, Lyn pushed back in her chair and sighed. She was right, and the chiropractor had been wrong. She didn’t have rheumatoid arthritis. Everything she had read did not completely ring true. Okay, so she had a few of the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis but the vast majority of the descriptions did not fit her at all. Her sigh was one of relief. She probably had just thrown her hip out somehow—why else did it stick out funny—and if she had to visit the chiropractor on a regular basis to keep her hip in line, so what? She could manage that.



Ah, summer in Wisconsin! Everything was jeweled green, the temperatures were moderate, and June promised to bring in a gently warm July and August. The stress at work had lessened somewhat, and Lyn felt like singing. Maybe they would do some

camping. Her heart was light as she went to bed that night.

Towards dawn Lyn stirred restlessly, wrapped in a fitful dream. Someone had her ankle in a vice. As the handle was turned, the vice clamped more tightly, and she begged her torturer to stop. A thought floating in another part of her sleeping mind told her that she needed to wake up from this nightmare. The grinding of the trash truck just outside her window had woven itself into her dream as a grinding sound in her ankle. Lyn's eyes popped open, and she jerked herself from the foggy tentacles that tried to drag her back into the nightmare. She had always grumbled about the early hour that the waste management company decided to make the rounds, but this morning she was grateful. The crunching sound of the trash being smashed had helped pull her out of the crazy dream.

Swinging her legs over the edge of the bed, Lyn stood up to begin the day. A gasp escaped her lips as hot fire vaulted through her ankle and up her leg. She fell back onto the bed.

“Jerry, turn on the light.” The words were barely a squeak. Jerry rolled over and mumbled something unintelligible. Lyn reached out and grasped his shoulder.

“Jerry, something's wrong. I can't get over to the light switch. Please get up and turn on the light.” Lyn's voice was edged with panic.

Jerry woke up and rolled out the other side of the bed. He crossed the room and flicked on the switch. Lyn's eyes did not need to adjust to the bright light to see the red and swollen ankle that stared at her angrily.

Jerry was back at her side. “Good grief! Your ankle must be at least three times the size it should be.” Lyn dissolved into tears. What was going on?



As Lyn waited in the white-walled little room punctuated with stainless steel accessories she went over and over the past few days. How could she have broken her foot, or twisted her ankle without knowing it? She had heard of people stepping off stools and

causing hairline fractures that would cause this type of pain and swelling, but she hadn't been on any stools. Maybe she had stepped down too hard on the stairs, or maybe . . . . The medical doctor interrupted her thoughts as he entered the room.

After a careful though painful examination, the doctor dismissed all her theories about a twisted or broken ankle. "There is nothing that is structurally wrong with your ankle. I think you have rheumatoid arthritis."

The knot in Lyn's stomach went from golf-ball size to basketball size. Lyn sputtered, "But I'm so young, how could that be?"

"We don't know why rheumatoid arthritis strikes. Our current theory is that it is an autoimmune disorder."

"What does that mean?" Lyn had occasionally heard the term before and read it frequently in her few hours of research, but she needed to know more.

"For some unknown reason the immune system attacks healthy tissue, causing inflammation and pain." The doctor's tones were reassuring as he continued. "I need to have some blood work done, and I'd like to recommend you to a specialist to have a confirmation in diagnosis; but if the outcome is truly rheumatoid arthritis there are many medications that we can use to help you."

Like a door being opened a crack and letting sunlight into a dark room, Lyn saw hope. There were things that the docs could do to help her. Relief began to dissolve that knot in her gut. While she had the doctor's attention, she determined to bring up another issue.

"I need your advice in one more area. My husband and I have been married for a few years, and we would like to have children. So far we haven't been able to get pregnant. Can you recommend anything that could help us?"

"I'll give you a referral to an infertility specialist as well as to the rheumatologist. But you need to know that some of the medications that you may be prescribed for rheumatoid arthritis will not be advised if you are trying to become pregnant."

That crack in the door began to close. Lyn felt like she was slipping back over a cliff into darkness.



The specialist confirmed the diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis. Lyn searched through the family health history and found that her great uncles on Dad's side had had arthritis and even the deformed hands. She couldn't have hands that didn't work! Her whole job revolved around using her hands on a computer keyboard. She couldn't go down this road! Fear began to eat away at her soul, and the tension in her life mounted.

"I have to function," Lyn told herself as she agreed to take the Celebrex that the rheumatologist prescribed. "But I still want to become pregnant." She firmly refused the stronger medications that the doctor recommended. She was doing her homework now. She spent hours on the computer researching arthritis medications and their side effects. She had become a mini-expert in rheumatoid arthritis. She would face this monster with increased knowledge. She would do all that she could to keep from becoming deformed, yet still give herself the chance to have a baby.

The Celebrex helped the pain but did not alleviate it. She was able to function and do all of her work just as well as she always had, though she had to hide the tears that refused to be checked at times. Her boss knew about her doctor visits and the medication, but she would not let him know how much she really hurt. She loved this job—she needed this job. She could not let him see any weakness in her.