



## **Welcome to Our Community!**

Please take a minute to read this introduction to our clinic and to our community. We are delighted that you are interested in joining us!

### **What is different about Boulder Community Acupuncture?**

#### **We treat in a community setting**

Most US acupuncturists treat patients on tables in individual cubicles. This is not traditional in Asia, where acupuncture usually occurs in a community setting. In our clinic we primarily use recliners, and tables when needed, in a quiet, soothing space. Treating patients in a community setting has many benefits: it's easy for friends and family members to come in for treatment together; many patients find it comforting; and a collective energetic field becomes established which actually makes individual treatments more powerful. In some styles of acupuncture, the needles are removed after only a few minutes or after a half hour at most. The style of acupuncture we practice at BCA allows patients to keep their needles in as long as they want. Most people learn after a few treatments when they feel "done" - this can take from twenty minutes to an hour or more. Many people fall asleep and wake feeling refreshed.

#### **We have a sliding scale**

Most US acupuncturists also see only one patient per hour and charge \$65 to \$175 per treatment. They tend to spend a long time talking with each patient, going over medical records, asking many questions. We don't. The only way that we at BCA can make acupuncture affordable and still make a living ourselves is to streamline our treatments and see multiple patients in an hour, so we have returned to the traditional approach. Instead of asking you lots of questions, we focus on the most important information and on our diagnostic skills to decide how to treat you. This is exactly how acupuncture is practiced traditionally in Asia - many patients per hour and very little talking.

Because we have a sliding scale, we cannot do insurance billing (that's the insurance companies' rule). We'll be happy to give you a receipt that you can submit for reimbursement. BCA does not receive grants, state or federal money, or insurance reimbursement. BCA exists because patients pay for their treatments - it is a sustainable community business model.

#### **Our Commitment to You**

We want to make it possible for you to receive acupuncture regularly enough and long enough to get better and stay better. We want our community to be welcoming to all different kinds of people. We want to give you the tools to take care of your own health so that you will not need to rely on costly, high-tech interventions unless absolutely necessary. We will provide a safe environment with skilled practitioners.

#### **What We Need From You**

##### **Responsibility**

BCA does not provide primary care medicine! Acupuncture is a wonderful complement to Western medicine, but it is not a substitute for it. If you think you have a problem that is not "garden variety" (meaning, you are worried that you might have a serious infection, a malignant growth, or an injury that won't heal), or if you want someone to go over the details of your medical history from a western medical perspective, you need to see a primary care physician (ND, MD, or DO). We usually refer our patients to Clinica/People's Clinic if they don't have a doctor nor insurance coverage. But you cannot expect us to diagnose and treat something really serious. We can provide complementary care for conditions which require a physician's attention - for instance, we often treat patients for the side effects of chemotherapy. But we need you to take responsibility for your own health.

## **Flexibility**

The community setting requires some flexibility from you. For instance, many patients have a favorite recliner or they are used to being on a table. When we are busy, these may not be available. Similarly, we have a few patients who snore. Other patients who dislike snoring bring earplugs to their treatments. Some patients even bring favorite pillows or blankets from home with them, because they prefer theirs to ours. That's fine with us. Basically, we need you to participate in making yourself comfortable before we arrive to treat you.

In terms of how long you want to stay - let the acupuncturist know if you need to leave at a certain time. In general, if you feel done, open your eyes and give us a meaningful look - if your eyes are closed, we think you're asleep and we won't wake you up.

## **Community-Mindedness**

The soothing atmosphere in our clinic exists because all of our patients create it by relaxing together. We appreciate everyone's presence! This kind of collective stillness is a rare and precious thing in our rushed and busy society. Maintaining this reservoir of calm requires that no one talk very much in the clinic space. If you want to have a substantial conversation, we can do this in reception if we are not busy or we can schedule that separately and do it by phone.

If you have questions about acupuncture and how it works or want to know what each point does, we cannot answer while we are treating you - these are often large topics and we want to keep talking to a minimum. If you have questions, we'll happily give you reading materials!

Part of our success is that our patients learn the "routine" and take on a lot of responsibility for the appointments. Re-scheduling and making payment happens with the invisible receptionist or the volunteer BEFORE each treatment, so you can relax and enjoy treatment. Please take purses with you; coats and shoes are left in the closet up front. Please turn off your cell phone.

## **Commitment**

Acupuncture is a PROCESS. It is very rare to be able to resolve a problem with one treatment. In China, a typical protocol for a chronic condition could be acupuncture every other day for three months! Most of our patients don't need that much acupuncture, but virtually every patient requires a course of treatment, rather than a single treatment, in order to get what they want from acupuncture.

One big reason that we are able to keep our prices so low is because of the extraordinary amount of marketing our patients do on our behalf - we don't have to advertise. We cannot express how grateful we are for this. Our patients are such effective marketers because they have first-hand experience of how well acupuncture works. All of our satisfied patients basically made a commitment to a course of treatment.

We will suggest a course of treatment, which can be anything from "we'd like to see you once a week for six weeks" to "we'd really like to see you every day for the next four days". This suggestion is based on our experience with treating different kinds of conditions. If you don't come in often enough or long enough, acupuncture may not work for you. The purpose of our sliding scale is to help you make that commitment. We need you to commit to the process of treatment in order to get good results.

Some patients tell us they cannot come in as often as recommended. We are open to work with you so if you can come 2x a week rather than the recommended 3-4x, that is what we will do. We are here to assist you in feeling better, so please let us know what works for you!

And, last, but not least...enjoy the space. We do, and hope that Boulder Community Acupuncture can be an important part of your community.

## **Boulder Community Acupuncture Staff**