



Well-Equipped to Manage Osteoporosis: Ms. Penny Shure

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Penny Shure, of upstate New York, is the mother of two teens, owner of a Pilates studio, and a fitness instructor. Her life is dedicated to the notion of "healing through movement." Two years ago Penny was diagnosed with osteoporosis; today she muses, "After the initial shock of my diagnosis wore off I truly considered myself to be the perfect person to have the disease." She explains that she was already working with "this specific population of clients; many of my clients," she said, "have osteoporosis and I teach them exercise modifications that can improve their overall health and bone quality." Since Penny's diagnosis, she has had ample opportunity to practice what she "preached," and, in so doing, has proven that positive results are possible. While Penny always met with great success teaching this population, she says that having osteoporosis herself has made her "much more compassionate. Now I understand the fears involved and both the emotional and functional impact... on an up close and personal level."

Penny is the support group leader for the National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF) in Albany, New York. Demonstrating her belief that each individual has an obligation to themselves, she asserts, "I encourage everyone I teach and meet to get involved with their health in a pro-active way. It is the responsibility of each individual to take care of themselves the best they can. I try

to be that resource for my clients and community and steer people towards the answers to their questions if I don't have them immediately. I am constantly reading and learning more about osteoporosis and different treatment options." Recently, Penny was in Washington, DC, to represent the NOF for World Osteoporosis Day. She visited members of congress and shared with them her perspective on "how the country can contribute to the healthcare system in curing this disease."

Osteoporosis was a Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program topic area in 2009, and Penny was nominated by NOF to serve as a consumer reviewer in the peer review of applications submitted to the program. When asked to comment on this opportunity, she describes it as "an amazing learning experience for me. I was humbled and grateful to see how much research and funding is going into the areas of disease research in our country. It was fascinating to meet the scientists and see things from their perspective. I had a lot to say and believe we all learned from each other. At first I was intimidated because I had never read a clinical trial before, but now I seek them out! It gave me an understanding of the depth of research and development that is expected from an excellent study and I look for that now when I research things on my own. My standards and expectations of the scientific community are very high because I've witnessed a spectrum of proposals and know that only the best are given consideration for grant funding."

Penny admits frustration with the dearth of research funds available to study diet and lifestyle modifications, including exercise, that she believes can bring about positive, sometimes instant, effects on bone health. However, she acknowledges, "There are some fascinating ideas being looked at... [that] will profoundly affect both the military and the general population in a tremendously positive way when brought to fruition." Reflecting on her experience, Penny says, "It was an honor to be a part of the panel; I never imagined I would have the opportunity to meet such interesting people, and it was exciting to share a common goal of curing osteoporosis!"

Slow down? Not Penny. As a witness to the healing powers of movement through her own personal experience and that of her clients with osteoporosis, Penny is committed to sharing her knowledge with others, improving overall health, and keeping people moving. She is working on a project that aims to teach healthy movement habits and bone health to children through music. Her goal is to "ultimately PREVENT the onset of osteoporosis." Toward that end, she is working with songwriter Nick Cosimano and guitarist Will Ackerman to record "Imagining Reality;" the CD is in production. Penny believes "that if we learn healthy habits as kids, they will translate into healthy habits as adults."