Neural therapy is not just another injection technique. It is a complex, safe, and very effective healing system for our time. The development of neural therapy has a long history. It stretches back to the discovery by Vienna's famous neurologist, Sigmund Freud, of the topical anesthetic effects of cocaine in 1883, and to the publication in Germany of the first textbook on healing anesthesia by Spiess only one year after Einhorn synthesized the first pharmaceutical local anesthetic, procaine, in his laboratory in 1905. Spiess described the technique of "trigger point injections," which some 60 years later were to change pain management in the US forever through the wonderful work and further development of this small but important aspect of neural therapy by the late Dr. Janet Travell. Dr. Travell was personally familiar with and inspired by the work of two German medical doctors, dentists, and brothers: Ferdinand and Walter Huneke.

Ferdinand Huneke is credited with being the father of modern neural therapy. He understood the importance of injecting surgical scars, following his first clinical observation in 1925 of a profound healing reaction after treating an old osteomyelitis scar in a young woman. Under the term preemptive anesthesia, his method is only now finding gradual acceptance in surgical departments, some 75 years after his initial discovery and publications. Huneke also collected and refined the original techniques for autonomic ganglion blocks with local anesthetics, nerve blocks, and the first epidural injections.

Many of the early injection techniques were first described by French physicians, amongst them the famous surgeon, Leriche. Leriche had originally developed surgical techniques for pain control, which included severing the thoracic sympathetic chain and cutting nerves in pain patients injured during WWI. As a much less invasive alternative he had developed injection techniques for each surgical procedure by 1925 and named the procaine injection the surgeon's "bloodless scalpel." Unfortunately, 75 years later surgical sympathectomies for pain control are still done in some hospitals, but have largely been replaced by nerve blocks and regional anesthesia procedures worldwide. Most of the injection techniques used today have already been published and used extensively by the early physicians at the beginning of the last century. Many of their wonderfully intelligent and helpful techniques have been recently republished and renamed under different authors' names and with different indications, most often not giving credit to Huneke, Leriche, and the real pioneers in this field. Many injection procedures had been almost forgotten, such as the Frankenhauser ganglion block, one of the most profound healing techniques for problems of the pelvic floor.

The author of this comprehensive review of all relevant techniques, Mathias Dosch, is the son of Peter Dosch, one of a handful of the original Huneke students, colleagues, friends, and mentors, who ensured the handing down of these precious healing techniques to thousands of doctors of the next generations all over the world.

Neural therapy has become a traditional European healing system focusing on the health of the autonomic nervous system. Much of the neurophysiological understanding is based on the work of the early physiologists of the last century, especially the school of the Russian genius, Pavlov. The scientific basis of neural therapy rests on a simple neurophysiological truth: injury and illness often result in long-lasting dysfunction of the autonomic nervous system. The autonomic nervous system controls and regulates or coregulates most metabolic, immunological, healing, digestive, hormonal, and many other systemic functions. It controls such diverse issues as blood flow, pancreatic enzyme and insulin production, and metabolic activity of the liver. Relatively new is the finding that the neurotransmitters produced in the ganglia and transported to the synapses of the autonomic nervous system are released in the endothelium of blood vessels and activate or inactivate specific portions of the immune system. Scars can create abnormal signals that affect the autonomic nervous system and its branches for years after an injury or a surgery. Toxicity can offset an autonomic ganglion. Unhealed emotional trauma and conflicts can reach the autonomic nervous system via the limbic hypothalamic axis and change the fine orchestration of impulses flowing in the autonomic nervous system. A simple injection of procaine into the exact location where the abnormal impulse starts can restore order in the system and lead to deep healing, often instantly! It may be an injection into a surgical scar, a ganglion, or a vein. Commonly the site injected is located far away from the location of the patient's symptom.

The neural therapy techniques comprise an entire healing system that is scientifically sound. The techniques can be learned from this book. The thinking behind neural therapy can be learned by attending hands-on workshops and by apprenticeship with an experienced physician. Good history-taking and newer biofeedback methods such as autonomic response testing (ART) and electrodermal testing (EAV) have been able to predict which scar or which ganglion should be treated.

Neural Therapy is practiced today in all European countries, Mexico, and Central and South America. In France an offshoot of this work is known under the name mesotherapy. In the US, some of these wonderful techniques have already become a well-established part of
“regional anesthesia,” “nerve blocks,” and other pain control procedures, with most physicians being unaware of the long history of these techniques. John Bonica, who established the first renowned multidisciplinary pain clinic in Seattle, was fully aware of the work of Ferdinand Huneke and had studied his work diligently. In his ground-breaking 2-volume textbook on the management of chronic pain, many procedures are described which he first encountered in Huneke’s writing (personal communication). However, for complex academic and political reasons he chooses not to refer to the source in his writings. The traditional teaching of neural therapy in the English-speaking countries has made great progress in the last 14 years under the leadership of the American Academy of Neural Therapy. Hundreds of physicians have taken the workshops and have incorporated neural therapy safely and successfully into their practice. The Homeopathic Medical Board in the state of Nevada is the first major medical organization to have incorporated neural therapy into their statutes and to require this knowledge to be part of the material for the licensing exam.

Neural therapy is a healing technique that will often help where all other methods have failed. Often healing occurs so rapidly and unexpectedly that it is referred to as lightning reaction (or Huneke Phenomenon). It is safe, often noninvasive, and can be applied to common problems in all areas of medicine: general practice, ENT, ophthalmology, gynecology, internal medicine, pain management, pediatrics, psychiatry, and all other specialties and subspecialties. Thousands of clients have been helped already in Australia, Canada, the US, and the UK and countless patients in other countries. It is a healing system whose time has come.

Dietrich Klinghardt, M.D., Ph.D. February 2003
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Preface to the Third Edition

The textbook at hand is the result of a lifetime of experience with neural therapy. It is, so to speak, the essence that can be passed on in words and pictures. The ultimate craftsmanship depends on the individual practitioner. I was fortunate to learn from the last great master scholar of Ferdinand Huneke, my father Dr. Peter Dosch. He died in June of 2005 at the age of 90. Through his life and work, Peter Dosch made neural therapy accessible to teachers and students. It is my honorable task to continue his opus. The need for a third English edition of the Atlas of Neural Therapy with Local Anesthetics, which will contain extracts of the Manual of Neural Therapy According to Huneke by Dr. Peter Dosch and myself, proves the fact that neural therapy is now completely established internationally. Today, minds are open to a therapy that my father had to fight for, and neural therapy has found its place as a complement to classic orthodox medicine.

Mathias P. Dosch, M.D.