



MARKET SQUARE WELLNESS CENTER

Est. 2002

COMMUNITY ACUPUNCTURE CLINIC

Please take a few minutes to *slowly* read this introduction to our clinic and community.
We are happy that you have an interest in joining us.

MARKET SQUARE WELLNESS CENTER IS DIFFERENT from almost all acupuncture clinics in the United States in two important ways:

1. Most acupuncture clinics use a style of acupuncture where needles are inserted directly into the area of pain. The problem with this approach is that it can feel pretty uncomfortable, and one runs the risk of aggravating any pain. We are experts in different styles and traditions of acupuncture. These methods are time-tested and derived from the *I Ching*, one of the oldest books in the world. The effects can sometimes seem nothing less than miraculous.

The acupuncture points chosen may be on the scalp and ears, from the elbows to the fingers, and from the knees to the toes. Consequently, you'll just have to roll your sleeves and pant legs up, in order to get ready for your treatment. Our treatments are efficient, comfortable and extremely effective. Pain relief can occur in seconds with long lasting relief of chronic pain resulting over a series of treatments.

2. MSWC is also one of the first acupuncture clinics established in the country as part of the Community Acupuncture Network (CAN) whose mission is to make acupuncture affordable for everyone, maintaining that health care should not cost an arm and a leg, nor be given as charity – but shared as a human right.

We can help accomplish this by offering one of the world's oldest and most effective medical treatments—acupuncture—in a comfortable group setting. By doing this we can engender a warm community atmosphere and lower cost per treatment, thereby making treatments available to people of all means, and ultimately providing an opportunity for more frequent use of acupuncture, with better outcomes. If you'd like more information about community acupuncture, visit communityacupuncturenetwork.org.

In addition to acupuncture, we also offer a range of massage services, a resource library with reading area and tea spot within our community home. We hope you'll find yourself comfortable here – and we encourage you to enjoy your time while playing an important part in changing the way high quality health care is delivered in our city, state, and country.

Community acupuncture practices are grown through the efforts of the acupuncturists and patients, who naturally rely on each other for success moving forward. Most of our staff barter their time and hard work in exchange for acupuncture treatments. Opportunities are available for those interested in bartering services, skills or time for the benefit of our community practice. If you would like to directly support our mission of helping to bring social justice to health care, please talk to our front desk staff regarding opportunities with our clinic. ▶

THE BEAUTY OF THE SLIDING SCALE

Research performed over many years in the United States, Europe and Asia has shown that acupuncture is undeniably most effective for current health concerns when it is done frequently and regularly. We've found this to be especially true at the beginning of a course of treatment, when we are getting the ball rolling. Once a week is usually the minimum required to make progress with a health issue, though more frequent visits are common.

The purpose of the sliding scale is ultimately to separate the issues of money and treatment. When this is done, acupuncture can be available as often as needed, affording quicker and more lasting results. To this end, we offer the following *guidelines* for what you might pay each treatment, based on your individual budget.

Yearly Income	Initial visit, one-time paperwork fee	Acupuncture Treatments	Initial Visit Fee in Total
Under \$20,000	\$15	\$15	\$30
\$20,000–\$25,000	\$15	\$20	\$35
\$25,000–\$35,000	\$15	\$25	\$40
\$35,000–\$50,000	\$15	\$30	\$45
\$50,000+	\$15	\$35	\$50+

These figures are meant as *guidelines only*; **the bottom line is you should choose a rate you feel you can budget for at each visit.** We understand that everyone's financial situation differs greatly, even week to week! Remember, **our goal is to be able to provide acupuncture to you as often as is needed for improvement of your health issues.** Keep in mind the number/frequency of visits your acupuncturist recommends for you during this first visit, as you choose your fee for each visit coming up.

Because we offer a sliding scale, we cannot accept insurance billing (that's the insurance companies' rule, not ours). If you have insurance that covers acupuncture, we'll be happy to give you a payment receipt, and you can submit it for reimbursement; that's OK with the insurance companies. We also offer simple cash receipts for your own records as well.

Our clinic does not receive grants, state or federal money, or insurance reimbursement. It exists because patients pay for their treatments – in a sustainable community business model.

TREATMENT

Most acupuncture treatments in the United States take place on a table in a room by oneself. This is not traditional in Asia, where acupuncture usually occurs in a community setting. We all know the value of 'power in numbers'. Would you prefer to eat in an empty restaurant, or one that is full of people and bustling? How about an empty movie theater? We neither! A healthy group setting creates a dynamic that can be used for all of our benefit in an acupuncture clinic. Receiving treatment in a community setting has other tangible benefits, as well: it's easier for friends and family members to come in together and many patients find it a relief to not be isolated during their treatment. In addition, our practice allows patients to keep their

needles in as long as they want, as we observe the 'right' amount of time varies from person to person.

Most people learn after a few treatments when they feel 'done' or 'cooked'. This can take anywhere from twenty minutes to a couple of hours. You can stay as long as you feel comfortable doing so—or until we close for the day! If you want to be finished at a specific time, ask your acupuncturist. We'll make sure you're out on time. Otherwise, we prefer you forget about time altogether. When you are feeling as though you are ready to end your visit, or need to get our attention, just open your eyes and give us 'a meaningful look,' and we will remove your points or be available otherwise. ▶



OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU...

Our goal is 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 tools to take care of your own health so that you need not only rely on an all-too-often impersonal and inefficient medical system offering costly, high-tech interventions.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES...

MSWC DOES NOT PROVIDE PRIMARY CARE MEDICINE.

Acupuncture is a wonderful complement to Western medicine, but it is not a substitute for it. If you have, or think you may have a potentially serious condition such as an infection, unexplained weight loss or gain, heart conditions, a suspected fracture or dislocation, severe abdominal pain, unexplained bleeding, respiratory distress etc., or if you want a doctor to go over the details of your medical history, you should either visit your primary care physician or go to the local emergency room, as appropriate. We'd be happy to provide referrals for very capable doctors in the Greater Hartford area. Please do not expect us to diagnose and treat something life threatening. We can provide care for a multitude of conditions, from colds and the flu, to treating musculoskeletal pain, as well as being of great value in gynecological/female health. However, acupuncture is not primary care medicine.

FLEXIBILITY. The community setting does require some flexibility from you. For instance, some patients have a favorite recliner. When we are busy, someone may be in your favorite chair. Similarly, we have a few patients who may snore. Patients who dislike snoring can bring earplugs to their treatments. Be creative.

We will provide you with skilled practitioners who continue to sharpen clinical skills through ceaseless education, in order to provide you with the absolute best quality acupuncture treatments. We will provide a safe environment free of judgment. We will always be available to listen to any advice and/or feedback you may have about mswc. We will do all of this with a sense of humor and help from you as well.

We are grateful for this! If you want, you can bring a favorite clean pillows or blankets from home for your treatment. Basically, *we need you to make yourself comfortable in the Big Room before we arrive to treat you.* So grab a blanket, kick off your shoes and make yourself at home.

COMMITMENT. *Acupuncture is most often a process.* It is unrealistic to expect long-standing health issues to resolve after three or four visits. A typical course of treatment for long-standing conditions in China is acupuncture every other day for three months!

Thankfully, most folks do not need such an intense regimen. However, almost all people will require some course of treatment varying in length and frequency, depending on their individual needs. Part of the 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 do very little advertising otherwise. We are very grateful for this.

In fact, truth be told, if it were not for happy and vocal patients, community acupuncture would cease to be available. Our patients are such effective marketers





because they have first-hand experience of how well acupuncture works. *Almost all of our satisfied patients basically made a commitment to a course of treatment.*

On your first visit, your acupuncturist 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 probably won’t work for you. *The purpose of our sliding scale is to help you make that commitment.* If you have questions about how long it will take to see results, please ask us, or if you think you need to adjust your treatment plan, please let us know. We need you to commit to the process of treatment in order to get the results we both want for you.

FINALLY, A WORD ABOUT COMMUNITY-MINDEDNESS...

The treatment room is intended to remain a quiet space for you and others to rest and sort it all out. Its restful atmosphere exists through our patients relaxing together. We appreciate everyone’s presence! We find this kind of collective stillness is a rare and valuable thing in our rushed and isolating society. Maintaining this reservoir of calm requires that no one talk very much in the clinic space – including us. We ask that all speaking be done in a whisper or very low tone of voice. If you would like to speak to your acupuncturist one-on-one at any length, please let us know. We can arrange for time in the office.

Unfortunately, we can’t explain what every point does, or how acupuncture works, while we are treating you - these are very large topics! This is why our resource library exists. Or, if you have questions about acupuncture and how it works, you can go to our website and look for the 'links' section, which will bring you to many informative web sites. If you have questions, we’ll happily give you plenty to read!

Part of our success is that our patients learn the “routine” and take on a lot of responsibilities for the appointments. Re-scheduling and making payment happens at the front desk before each treatment, so you can relax and enjoy treatment without concern for details afterwards (the exception is today – your first visit). Please take all personal belongings, (bags, shoes, etc.) with you back into the treatment room where there will be a plastic crate available behind/next to your recliner for your stuff. We cannot be responsible for items left in the clinic after your visit. And of course, please turn off your cell phone or pager.

Most of us will park behind the clinic building anywhere on Market Square.

Last but not least – enjoy your time here. This is what we are all here for. We hope that mswc can be a valuable part of your community and health.

— *Scott, Julie, Bob, and the mswc staff and family*

