

In March 2022, I was diagnosed with suspected Rheumatoid arthritis, I'm 58. For about 5 years I've had increasing pain and stiffness in my hands which I put down to doing too much in life and my work. In February I became very aware of my jaw feeling strange; it was aching and tight and would click like it was going out of alignment. I'd been told many times by dentists I grind my teeth but even so I'd never experienced anything like this. In March I returned home from work one day feeling exhausted as though I was coming down with a bug of some sort. I had a temperature and the next morning woke with the pain worse in my hands and fingers and now pain also my knees and feet. I've always been very active and have always kept fit. I'm a regular walker and have never had a problem with my knees, so this was a concern for me that I couldn't make sense of. My knees ached and clicked when bending them, they felt swollen, although didn't appear to be so. I cut back on my walks but this didn't make any difference it made them feel worse. At night I slept on my side with my hand's flat palm to palm on top of each other to try to rest them.

With growing concern and a need to get a better understanding of what was happening to me, I decided to make an appointment with the Dr I was sent for a series of blood tests and a hand x-ray. The x-ray showed no inflammation just some wear and tear. The blood test however showed an elevated Rheumatoid Arthritis factor but other inflammatory markers were normal. The elevated RA factor result floored me. I've always lived a healthy lifestyle; I've been a vegetarian for all my adult life eating organic foods and it's very rare for me to get sick even with a cold. I managed to stay covid free through the pandemic despite electing not to be vaccinated.

Following the RA diagnosis, I immediately started to inform myself not only about the disease itself but more importantly how I could heal myself. It was clear to me that I was definitely not going to be taking any of the frightening drugs that I had been reading about and that are freely prescribed. I cut out everything and anything that could in the slightest way contribute to inflammation in my body and within weeks, it did make a difference. The pain was less and I was not as fatigued. But still, I knew instinctively there was more going on.

In May I had the great fortune to meet *the* most incredible woman called Rebecca Dutton <http://www.mercurymadness.org> an absolute altruist through and through, she was/is the light in the darkness. Rebecca immediately advised me to have a panoramic x-ray of my mouth. I was well aware of the connection between what's in the mouth and health, in 2011 on the advice of a Naturopath I'd had 11 amalgam fillings removed. A few years later however I made a grave error of having a root canal in my back right tooth. So fearful I was of the dangers of having a root canal, I'd already had 3 teeth removed. But my dentist at the time was concerned that my bite was being compromised and would be even more so if yet another tooth was extracted, so reluctantly I consented.

The panoramic x-ray according to the dentist showed no infection or any other problems. I sent the x-ray to Rebecca who forwarded it to Dr Mendonça, a head & neck surgeon/metal-free dentist in Lugo, Galicia whom she has been working with for many years and he offered a very different point of view. He told me I had a massive infection in the root canal tooth and an extremely congested natural drainage duct in my right lower jaw. Although alarming to hear, at the same time I felt an enormous sense of relief, this is where the pain in my body was coming from, my mouth. It had been telling me since February but I hadn't at that point joined the dots. I knew now I was going to get better.

In July I went to Lugo and met Dr Mendonça, he is the most incredible surgeon and human being one could ever have the pleasure to meet. I felt immediately safe and at ease in his extraordinarily attentive care. The next day I had a 3-hour operation to remove the root canal tooth, and the infection and had 3 zirconium implants put in using stem cell therapy. I was shocked to hear that the root canal tooth had a deep amalgam filling sandwiched between it and the crown!! I spent a week in Lugo recovering and for the following 3 months followed a very strict pureed, soft food diet. This was to allow everything to heal and for the bone to wrap around the implant posts pre having the crowns fitted 3 months later. I returned home to France and over the next weeks, the pain in my hands, fingers, knees and jaw began to dissolve and disappear. It has been stunning to experience. In October I returned to Lugo. CT scans showed my mouth clear of infection and the bone forming around the posts. The zirconium crowns were then fitted.

Now with the dental work completed and feeling incredibly blessed and fortunate, I am under the careful guidance of Dr Pouria in London who is supporting me through a prescribed detoxification process.

Karen Fielding