



# Bonnie Prudden: Inspiring Health at Every Age

NHPC Staff

**I**t seems Bonnie Prudden, age 97, holds the key to perfect health at any age. Her secret, a combination of physical fitness and Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy™, has kept her healthy and active over the span of her own lifetime, proving that if you take time to care for yourself, you can age gracefully, never losing your vitality or spirit. In 2006, she was the first person to ever be inducted into the Massage Hall of Fame, and also holds a Lifetime Achievement award from the President's Council on Physical Fitness.



If you remember the 1950's, Bonnie Prudden was a household name to you. You may have read one of her books, watched her syndicated television show, sported her exercise fashion line, read one of her many articles in *Sports Illustrated*, and at the very least you heard about her conversations with American President Eisenhower which led to *The Report That Shocked the President*, which showed that American children were alarmingly out of shape, the least fit children in the world.

If you were born later, much of what you remember about physical fitness in grade-school is thanks to her. Because of Prudden, many people from all walks of life began finding time for exercise in their schedule. Born into an era that didn't understand the importance of physical fitness, Prudden taught people how to take care of themselves through exercise. Even now, at the age of 97, she continues to inspire people to make time for exercise in their day. How could you not be inspired, when Prudden herself is still active, healthy, and full of energy at the age of 97?

If you work in natural health, you may have heard of myotherapy. Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy™ is one of the 66 modalities recognized by the Natural Health Practitioners of Canada, and boasts a 95% success rate in curing muscular pain. Learning from Dr. Janet Travell's method of trigger point injection therapy, Prudden developed her own method of trigger point therapy that is non-invasive and can even be practiced at home without doctor supervision. This method relies on the power of your

hands and elbows to relieve pain and discomfort from your life. Certified Bonnie Prudden Myotherapists receive 1,300 hours of schooling and are required to report back every two years for an additional thirty-five hours of continuing education hours. There are a few Canadians recognized as practicing Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy™, but most of Prudden's students are practicing in the United States, coming from her own myotherapy school in Tuscan, Arizona.

All her life, Prudden has been full of energy, ready to take on her next adventure.

She tells us that her energetic spark was ignited as early as when she was an infant, and that as young as two years old, she "was climbing out [her] window into the night", searching for adventure. Her mother didn't know what to do with her overactive daughter, and enrolled her in ballet the same year in an attempt to exhaust her. This might have exhausted her enough to stop sneaking out of her window in the middle of the night, but Prudden began to blaze trails in the fitness world as she grew up. As a young woman she danced on Broadway and became one of the top female mountain climbers in the world.

When Prudden was 23 she was in a bad skiing accident and fractured her pelvis in four places. To make matters worse, her doctor told her that she would never dance, climb, or ski again, and would never be able to have children. To most this would be considered a major setback, but it seems Prudden took it on as a challenge. When asked what she was thinking after her doctor gave her such a negative diagnosis, she said "what I was really thinking was *up yours*." She did go on to prove her doctor wrong, continuing to be active all her life and giving birth to two children. She now serves as an inspiration for anyone living with pain and physical injury. With the right care, you can and will achieve pain free existence again.

Prudden's method to pain free existence is a combination of physical fitness and Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy™. She believes that you cannot have one without the other, and has even included an exercise regimen with her myotherapy training. She believes that stress is a major precursor for chronic pain, telling us "you have to know that if you have any injury, real injury in your life, that it stays there and can come back again when you have stress in your life. Suddenly, you have a backache, or shoulder pain, or something else... then you can't understand why you have a backache, you've never had a backache before. [But] you've never done any exercise before [either]." Prudden's method seems simple enough, maintain an active lifestyle to keep your



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body strong, and when do you encounter unavoidable pain from injury, treat yourself with Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy™ to release pressure from those trigger points that are causing the pain to surface.

If you're interested in trying Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy™ on yourself or loved ones, you can start by picking up a copy of Prudden's book, *Pain Erasure the Bonnie Prudden Way*, which was first published in 1980 and is on the New York Times Bestseller list. This book walks you through Prudden's techniques in simple terms using charts, pictures, and diagrams, that are easy to understand. Plus, because Prudden believes her therapy cannot be complete without physical fitness, she dedicates the later part of the book to showing people how to begin an exercise regime. If you've never exercised before, or if you are recovering from physical injury that makes

exercise difficult, this section will help you on your way to becoming physically fit.

Every year, Bonnie Prudden celebrates her birthday by doing a somersault into her backyard pool, and her 97<sup>th</sup> birthday was no exception. If that isn't proof enough that her methods to pain free existence work, I can only encourage you to try them out for yourself. With a little determination and self care, it seems that anyone can recover from injury and live a long and healthy life.

*More information about Bonnie Prudden Myotherapy™ can be found at [www.bonnieprudden.com](http://www.bonnieprudden.com)*