

Doman Method Helps Kyoto Girl Beat Palsy

A 10-year-old Kyoto girl has become the first person in Japan to recover from cerebral palsy by undergoing treatment and rehabilitation



RABU KONISHI, 10, smiles in the arms of Dr. Glenn Doman in January when he visited Japan. Two years of rigorous physical exercises, devised by Doman as a therapy for cerebral palsy, helped Rabu make a great recovery.

devised by Dr. Glenn Doman of Philadelphia.

Dr. Doman is founder of the Institute for the Achievement of Human Potential.

The girl is Rabu Konishi, daughter of Naoki Konishi, a company executive. When she was one month old she developed a blockage in the guttlet and it was decided to operate on her. During the operation her heart and respiration stopped for a time and as a result she was stricken with cerebral palsy. Her arms and legs were paralyzed and she could not speak even when she was three years old.

Rabu entered a primary school at the age of six but had to drop out when she was a second-grader.

In February 1986, Konishi learned from a story in The Yomiuri Shimbun that Dr. Susumu Samoto, a pediatrician, had opened a Japanese office of Doman's institute in Kobe.

Konishi immediately contacted Samoto to find out if the therapy devised by Do-

man could help his daughter.

Doman's theory is that a partly damaged brain can grow if given stimulation through physical motion.

He established his institute 40 years ago. It is staffed by neurosurgeons, psychologists and others and offers treatment without resort to operations or drugs.

Relatives of the patient first take lessons on the theory and practice of the therapy at the institute and are then given a concrete treatment and rehabilitation program to be carried out at home.

With an introduction from Samoto, Konishi went to Philadelphia in April 1986 to receive lectures on the therapy for one week.

Immediately on returning home, he started Rabu on the strenuous course of physical fitness movements.

Doman's theory says that rehabilitation should be carried out in a thorough manner from the beginning.

With her mother Reiko as instructor, Rabu started the exercises, which consisted every day of 60 minutes of arm and leg movements, two kilometers of crawling on the belly, 2.7 kilometers of crawling on hands and knees, 108 repetitions of forward and backward movements on the belly, and 1.6 kilometers of walking using a handrail.

Sporadic convulsions which Rabu suffered from stopped two months after the start of the rehabilitation.

The intensity of the therapy was stepped up when Rabu became able to speak and to walk unaided.

The therapy was videotaped and the tapes sent to the institute in the United States. Staff at the institute sent instructions to Konishi by facsimile.

In addition, institute staffers came to Japan twice a year to give direct instructions.

Two years after the start of the tough physical fitness training, Rabu has now acquired the physical ability of others of her age, except for running, and she can now do gymnastics.

She said she was glad she could do various things she could not do before, although the exercises were very hard.

On the occasion of a visit to Japan in January, Doman said that Rabu during the first nine months attained 38 percent of the ability of other children of her age and that her subsequent growth both physically and mentally was marvellous.

He said that her success would be a great encouragement to other disabled children. Rabu's marvellous recovery will be reported by Doman to the meeting of the Pediatric-Neurosurgical Society in Kurume, Fukuoka, on Wednesday.

Yoichi Fukunaga, a jockey who sustained brain damage after a fall during a horse race, has also undergone treatment using Doman's therapy and has recovered to some extent.