



Introduction

When I began my medical practice about twenty years ago, holistic or alternative medicine was a fringe movement, regarded with suspicion by all but a handful of doctors. At that time the American Medical Association officially opposed the idea that diet had anything to do with disease and claimed that the use of herbs, vitamins and homeopathic medicines was quackery. Mind-body medicine was also on the fringe. Nevertheless, after finishing my training in family medicine, I set out in crusading style to bring the fledgling holistic approach to my patients.

In those days, I believed that the reason chronic disease was so difficult to treat was because we were prescribing the wrong medicines. It seemed to me that conditions like asthma, heart disease and arthritis resisted orthodox therapies because the drugs doctors used did little more than suppress symptoms. I imagined that if I simply gave my patients remedies that addressed the underlying causes of their diseases, they would be cured in droves.

I practiced in this fashion for about five years, using a variety of alternative therapies, such as herbs and homeopathic medicines, and although my patients were not “cured in droves,” many did have wonderful results. For example, I treated more than five hundred children suffering from ear infections with natural remedies. About eighty percent of these cases cleared up without resort to antibiotics.

But twenty percent did not respond. And it is the patients who don’t respond to the usual treatments that have the most to teach their doctors. I began to suspect that factors we normally don’t associate with illness could be impediments to healing. Of two children treated for ear infections, for example, the one who had a calm mother cleared up beautifully, but the child with an anxious mother was still infected a week later. I used a therapy involving bee venom for osteoarthritis that worked well for some patients, while others showed no improvement whatsoever. I used natural therapies to treat two elderly women with metastasized colon cancer. One woman is alive ten years later, while the other lived only a few months.

All doctors confront the mystery of why some patients get better and others

don't. This mystery challenged my thinking for many years, and I began to construct a medical philosophy that encompassed more than just medicines. I began to ask detailed questions of my patients about the way they lived, the way they were treated as children, their relationships, careers, financial struggles or successes, goals, dreams, hopes and disappointments. I concluded that the use of medicines—whether conventional or natural—can be effective only in the context of the patient's story, and in conjunction with the correction of some of the "errors" in his or her life-style and way of thinking.

In accepting the premise that treatment should involve more than the use of medicines, the physician embarks on treacherous terrain. Where does he start when he wants to help his patients change their life-style and attitudes? To which sources does he turn? How can he point out the "errors" in the lives of his patients without pontificating?

During my evolution toward a more holistic practice, I relied heavily on the work of Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian mystic who founded a philosophical movement called "anthroposophy," after the Greek "human wisdom." Steiner also formulated an educational system practiced in the Waldorf schools, the second largest secular private educational system in the world. Unfortunately, his teachings in the field of medicine are less well known, partly because people remain skeptical of the way in which he obtained his knowledge, which was not the scientific method of reproducible experiments, but an intuitive process based on inspired insight. It is not my intention to explore Steiner's work in depth, but I do feel that a basic understanding of his ideas concerning the human being and the healing arts is a very necessary component of any holistic therapeutic system.

Steiner taught that the human being has four "bodies" or spheres of activity, and that human beings enjoy good health when these four spheres are in harmony or balance. These four interlocking bodies are (1) the Physical Body, (2) the Life-Force Body, (3) the Emotional Body and (4) the Mental Body. They correspond to the four "kingdoms" and the four "elements" of the medievalists as follows:

1. Physical Body	Mineral Kingdom	Earth Element
2. Life-Force Body	Plant Kingdom	Water Element
3. Emotional Body	Animal Kingdom	Air Element
4. Mental Body	Human Kingdom	Warmth Element

According to Steiner, each of our four bodies reflects one aspect of our total being, and each is governed by specific rules. The Physical Body is the substance or matter of which our bodies are composed. It corresponds to the mineral realm and the

earth element. If we compare man to a house, then the Physical Body corresponds to the bricks and mortar out of which the house is built. If the bricks are faulty and the mortar deficient, the house will be unsound. We need a sound Physical Body if we are to consider ourselves healthy in any sense. It will come as no surprise that the health of our Physical Body is largely related to the food we eat. Thus, a wholesome diet is the absolute foundation on which we must build complete and long-term healing. Without right diet our medicines and other therapies will provide little benefit.

In the realm of the Life-Force Body, we rise above the level of mere substance to what Steiner called the “etheric” realm. The etheric realm pertains to the way physical substance is organized. Continuing our metaphor of the body as a house, imagine someone moving into the house and making it her own. This is a picture of the Life-Force Body enlivening the Physical Body. The Life-Force Body corresponds to the water element and plant life, and it is this body that we hope to affect when we give various medicines, particularly natural medicines like herbal extracts and homeopathically prepared plants and metals. These are carried in the fluids of the body—the blood and the lymph—and work to influence the way cells communicate, help achieve hormonal balance and adjust the relationship of the various organs to each other.

Although Steiner arrived at his concept of the four bodies intuitively, there actually is some scientific evidence for the existence of non-physical-life-force bodies in all living organisms—plant, animal and human. Harold Saxton Burr, a professor of anatomy at Yale University, spent many years researching what he called “fields of life” or “L-fields,” describing them as the blueprints of all life. He proposed that all living things were molded and controlled by “electrodynamic fields” that we can map and measure. Invisible and intangible, they are analogous to magnetic fields that cause iron filings scattered on a card held over a magnet to arrange themselves in the magnet’s force field pattern at both poles. Burr described these fields or bodies in the scientific terms of electromagnetism but it is easy to imagine them as fluid or watery, giving off an electromagnetic signal just as underground water gives off an electromagnetic signal that can be perceived by a dowser.

The third body, according to Steiner, is the realm of emotions or feelings and the dwelling place of the soul. In our house analogy we can compare the Emotional Body to the way the enlivening person has decorated the house—the inviting porch, welcoming garden, interior decorations and all the touches that make a home personal. Houses can be sunny or gloomy, cluttered or tidy, corresponding to the many moods and life-styles that characterize the human race. There is no doubt that our moods and life-style affect our health, just as the decorations of a house determine whether or not it is a pleasant place to live.

It is the Emotional Body that is first affected by the kind and quality of our

relationships. Many of my female patients with gynecological or intestinal problems could not heal until they made major changes in the relationships they had with parents or partners. In fact, I had three cases of women with highly abnormal pap smears that recurred in spite of surgical treatment. The problems cleared up only after they had a major reconciliation with their spouse or got a divorce. In my male patients, I have seen career worries cause health problems that immediately resolved when the patient achieved success in his field.

The Emotional Body corresponds to the air element and the animal kingdom. Unlike plants, whose movement is limited to the circulation of internal fluids, animals move through the outer world on their own volition. Thus, movement and exercise belong to this realm. Consider, for example, the simple act of standing up straight and tall and how this affects our mood and outlook. The way we move, including how we exercise and the sports in which we engage, affects our sense of well-being, our emotions and hence our health.

The fourth and final realm that I address in the prevention and treatment of illness is the realm of the ego or spirit, which we will call the Mental Body. This realm is the habitation of that unique part of each of us, the part that gives individuality and continuity to our life. In our house analogy, the Mental Body corresponds to the visitors coming and going into the house, their conversations, ideas and thoughts. These visitors stand for the Mental Body that can travel freely inside and outside the house, exchanging, communicating and recognizing the guests as others. While the emotions stem from the soul, our perception of these emotions and how they are used is the proper concern of the Mental Body.

Many diseases reveal themselves as a distortion of our warmth or Mental Body. Sick children, for example, usually have increased warmth or fever as their individual Mental Body participates in their struggle against disease. Later in life we often get colder—our hands and feet feel cold—leading to hypothyroidism or even cancer, a disease intimately associated with a loss of warmth and its ability to confer immunity. Women, however, experience hot flashes, which may be interpreted as a manifestation of the Mental Body working gently to separate her from the domestic life to which she has submerged her individuality, and push her into the world of work and community service. Often the warmth body becomes abnormally distributed so we have pockets of warmth. This is the metaphorical description of a rheumatic patient suffering from “hot” joints; or the patient suffering from eczema who experiences a fiery feeling in the skin.

The idea that we must seek healing on a number of levels is one that today is widely accepted; in fact, it forms the underlying philosophy of all holistic medicine. The problem lies in discovering the appropriate course of action to take in each of the

spheres or levels that comprise the human being. Even when we accept the fact that man must be healed on many levels, things can go very wrong. Recently I spoke with a professional in the publishing business who became interested in his health after he suffered a massive heart attack. He accepted the concept of holistic healing but the life-style changes he had made, although endorsed in many popular books, were getting him no closer to his goal of vibrant health; in fact, they made him grumpy and tired. He had given up junk food for a lowfat vegetarian diet; he took handfuls of vitamin pills; he walked on a treadmill every morning and evening; and he practiced relaxation therapy to help him deal with stress. Everything he did would get a nod of approval from the gurus of the burgeoning holistic movement; unfortunately, each of his choices was counterproductive.

The appropriate and effective approach to healing the different levels that comprise the human being is the subject of this book: Right diet for healing the physical body; beneficial medicines or therapies for the Life-Force Body; healing movement and exercise for the Emotional Body; and effective thinking activity for the Mental Body, activity that moves the human spirit forward in its evolution toward meaning, service and health.

So how do we determine the right diet for human beings? There are literally hundreds of books about diet and nutrition on the market, most of which suggest a diet low in fats and high in plant foods and complex carbohydrates. Some writers recommend large amounts of lean meat while others suggest a completely vegetarian diet. One school of thought promotes all raw foods; others recommend various systems of food combining. The authors of these books present many theories to explain why these diets *should* work; but *in practice*, the typical modern diet systems presented in our popular books have never been used by traditional groups of healthy human beings.

The one book on nutrition that actually presents a description of people who are healthy, and that gives an account of the diets that healthy people eat, is *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration* by Weston A. Price. During the 1930s and 1940s, Price traveled to isolated corners of the globe and studied the diets of tribes and villages that had no contact with western foods. His book has inspired many workers in the field of medicine and nutrition, including myself. It was on reading Weston Price's book that I decided to become a doctor, and it is the book to which I always return when questions of nutrition arise.

Price's book is important for two reasons. One is that it shows, through the medium of photography, how healthy people *look*. They have broad faces, flawless straight teeth and muscular, well-formed physiques. Second, it describes the characteristics of their diets, which can be summed up in two words: nutrient-dense. The

diets of isolated healthy peoples were extremely rich in minerals and vitamins, including certain vitamins found only in animal fats. In fact, it was the foods rich in animal fats that these people valued most highly for good health, stamina, freedom from disease and ease of reproduction. None of the groups he studied consumed a lowfat vegetarian diet, none ate all of their foods raw, and none practiced any system of food combining.

The book that translates Price's findings into practical recipes for modern Americans is *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon. Along with Price's masterpiece, her book serves as a companion to this volume, and the dietary principles she elucidates can serve as a general guide to all who seek better health.

As for supplements, I use a variety of concentrated food-based sources of nutrients instead of synthetic vitamins. Many of the products I recommend were developed by Dr. Royal Lee, a colleague of Dr. Price. These principles are discussed in detail in Chapter 1 and form the basis of the dietary recommendations found in the various disease chapters of this book.

When the physical body is supported by a good diet, the medicines we take can help fine-tune the organizing principles of our bodies. They can facilitate the circulation of fluids, help the cells communicate better, bring the various organs into equilibrium and restore hormonal balance, all of which come under the purview of the Life-Force Body. Most orthodox drugs merely suppress symptoms and in the process inhibit rather than facilitate balance and movement within the body. The result is side effects, often worse than the original disease.

In Chapter 2, we will explore a number of therapeutic principles, including the use of herbs, homeopathic medicines and various other therapies that affect the Life-Force Body. These principles are the gift of a number of great minds in the field of medicine, including Rudolf Steiner, Samuel Hahnemann and Edgar Cayce.

Movement and exercise belong to the realm of the Emotional Body and are discussed in Chapter 3. We express our emotions in the way that we move, and the kind of movement and exercise we engage in can make a real difference in our ability to heal. I don't believe that using a treadmill for 30 minutes each day confers the same benefits as creative, coordinated exercise like T'ai Chi, fencing, dance or tennis. Whenever possible, movement and exercise should be performed in the open air, as this realm corresponds to the air element.

We will also discuss specific movements that can help with specific emotional conditions that our body translates into disease. Many of the movements that I prescribe are inspired by the work of Jaimen McMillan, founder of the Spatial Dynamics movement and author of Chapter 3.

Although the Emotional Body is the seat of the emotions and the realm of the

soul, the proper domain for soul work is the Mental Body for, as I have said, our perception of our emotions and the use to which they are put is the proper stuff of our cognitive faculties.

Many books on holistic medicine urge readers to “get in touch with their feelings,” implying that the road to health requires that we become less inhibited, more spontaneous, more demonstrative of our emotions. Programs to deal with unpleasant feelings like anger, depression or stress often recommend “releasing” negative emotions through playacting or meditation. The fallback position when these programs don’t work is drugs, and the widespread use of antidepressants and similar medicines tells me that such programs aren’t particularly effective, especially in the long run.

The Mental Body is essentially the realm of meaning and as I gain experience as a doctor, I realize how important it is for my patients to access this meaning in their quest for health. The proper activity of the Mental Body is not feeling but focused meditation or *thinking*, an activity for which the human being is uniquely qualified. The Mental Body does not “get in touch with our feelings” but observes those feelings in a detached and objective way. And it is through thinking about our lives—our situation, our experiences, our relationships, our mission and, of course, our emotions—that we discover the purpose of our lives and very often, at the same time, come to a better understanding of why we are sick.

There is no greater joy in life than to have purpose, to know what your life means. Some find this meaning through their families and other relationships. Others meet their destiny through their work or through activities like music and sports. Those who have discovered the purpose of their lives—through observation, through study, through thinking—can expect to achieve vibrant health and longevity, not only because they make sensible use of food, medicines and exercise, but also because they cultivate a healthy Mental Body, one that integrates and remains in balance with the three lower bodies.

A basic meditation or thinking exercise that stimulates the Mental Body and helps it grow is given in Chapter 4.

The goal of medicine should be healing on all levels and all of us are moving toward that goal. The wise physician no longer dispenses drugs to treat a catalog of symptoms. She realizes that the medicines she prescribes and the therapies she recommends must be aimed at specific imbalances. She knows that diet, life-style, exercise and the life of the mind must all be addressed for true healing to occur.

But it is not enough to merely embrace these holistic principles. The patient needs accurate information and effective advice. The purpose of this book is to provide, for each of the four realms of the human being, rules and guidelines that work; and to stimulate the Mental Body, dwelling place of the human spirit, to become its

own wise physician through the exercise of that activity that makes the human being uniquely human—focused meditation, which is deliberate and objective thought.