

The Concept of Integrative Healing

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Detoxification

Both ancient medical practitioners and modern medical sages adhere to the idea that our bodies have an enormous innate healing capacity. What then blocks this healing power in chronically ill patients? The answer is the overload of toxins exceeds the body's ability to heal. Therefore, the simplest solution is detoxification, a concept almost foreign to modern conventional medicine, but very familiar to all ancient and holistic medical traditions.

Examination of any native medical tradition reveals the use of detoxifiers, tonifiers, purgatives and emetics. These cleansing preparations and formulations constitute the cumulative medical knowledge of our ancestors. For thousands of years, the South Asian Siddha Vaidya tradition has known about herbal formulations for detoxifying mercury, silver, tin and other heavy metals. These scourges of our time, thanks to the pervasive use of dental amalgams and heavy metals, lead to severe health problems and environmental pollution.

The Western tradition also had purgatives. The coffee enema, referred to in the past as "royal flushing," actually detoxifies the liver and gallbladder. It is most beneficial for patients with toxemia. In Tijuana, Mexico, where alternative cancer and medical clinics are flourishing, coffee enemas are employed regularly. Heroic figures in modern complementary and alternative medicine, such as Max Gerson and William Kelley, consider the coffee enema to be a necessity for cleansing the body of toxins and cell debris, when used in combination with good nutrients and digestive enzymes.

Of the four routes of elimination in the body: the kidneys, lungs, colon and the skin, the latter is most often neglected. Yet it is a very effective means of detoxification. Modern skin detoxification techniques include far infrared sauna, steam baths and clay baths. Far infrared can penetrate the tissue deeper than other types of sauna, and thus has an advantage for environmental detoxification. Dr. A. Lieberman of Charleston, SC is one of the pioneers in using sauna for detoxification. Steam baths, especially those equipped with ozone or superoxygen, are also good devices for detoxification.

In many ancient cultures, hot baths, mineral baths, sweat lodges and hot (sulfur) springs have been used for healing. Another important way to remove toxic chemicals from the body is by means of clay baths. "Clay has been used for thousands of years, and yet no one has been able to pin down what makes it a healer," observes Michael Abehera, author of *Amazing Cures From the Earth Itself - The Healing Clay*. These are the time-tested detoxification methods developed by our ancestors. Skin detoxification is very safe and beneficial. When one is highly toxic, the colon and kidneys are often under duress. Any further detoxification through them only adds more stress to these organs. It is therefore preferable to utilize the skin as an elimination route for these patients.

For deeper levels of healing, emotional release, mind-set adjustment, and spiritual cleansing must accompany the physical processes of detoxification. All stress has an impact on the autonomic nervous system, which responds with a defensive or adaptive mechanism. However, chronic stress of the autonomic nervous system ultimately manifests in disease. I have come to view all illness as a form of post-traumatic stress response with varying degrees of severity.

Habitual reactions to the same stress are a form of negative conditioning. Thus, certain teachings in holistic medicine seek to break through learned, negative patterns. Positive conditioning, in the form of prayers and affirmations, is good spiritual cleansing.

Regeneration

Of course, the body needs rebuilding after the ravages of toxic materials and negative thoughts are cleaned up. A good analogy is Swiss cheese - the body is full of holes after detoxification. With good nutrients and positive thoughts, these holes can be refilled. Once again we turn to the powerful techniques of the ancients, who also knew a lot about regeneration. A good example is Kaya Regeneration (also called Ela Kizhi) from the ancient South Asian tradition of Siddha Vaidya. Briefly, hot herbal oil is applied to the skin in quick long strokes using cloth-covered pouches. Based on our current understanding of burn physiology, it is hypothesized that the treatment simulates burn without producing sensations of pain and discomfort. This causes the body to produce growth factors, hormones, neurotransmitters, cytokines and other "messengers" associated with wound healing and tissue regeneration.

The modern equivalent of this technique is the practice of growth hormone administration in anti-aging medicine. However, growth hormone is only one of many hormones governing the regeneration of tissues. By stimulating the production of more than one hormone, Kaya Regeneration Therapy may have more potential than the current medical growth hormone treatment.

Melatonin is a natural hormone produced by the pineal gland from tryptophan, an essential amino acid. Scientific studies show that it has anti-cancer, anti-aging and anti-stress properties. On the other hand, low blood levels of melatonin have been associated with many disease conditions. Meditation has been shown to effectively increase melatonin production more than taking melatonin tablets. However, the most powerful technique for inducing melatonin production is probably Kaya Kalpa, another Siddha Vaidya regeneration technique. With this treatment, the participant remains in a totally darkened space for 40 days, eating only herbs mixed with honey. One of the biological results is continuous production of melatonin, which, in turn, induces continuous regeneration of tissues.

Kaya Kalpa is a powerful technique that requires great supportive care for the person who undergoes it. Few people have been able to complete this practice. Those known to have successfully completed it are Indian sages and yogis, Tibetan monks and Chinese Taoist masters. It is a treatment and a spiritual practice of the highest level.

Nourishment

For the body to detoxify and regenerate properly, sufficient nutrients must be provided. Like detoxification, the importance of nutrition is almost a mirage to conventional physicians, who receive very little training on the subject in medical schools. Patients will rarely get advice on proper eating. Even if physicians teach patients what to eat and what to avoid, they still don't explain healthy eating habits. More importantly, the spirit of eating is not taught.

"Fast Food" is a primary factor in the raging malnutrition and under-nourishment epidemic. Because of competing priorities in our fast pace of life, time has become a rare commodity. Highly processed fast food helps the busy modern person "save time." Even the way people eat reflects the time pressure; don't worry about shoveling the food into your mouth without chewing -- your stomach will do the digestive work. Such is the standard routine for many people. When eating is ignored or reduced to a mechanical process, there are severe consequences. Medical textbooks don't talk about this, but I will tell you what my observations are, and explain how you can repeat the tests.

When you don't chew your food properly, it has a hard time sliding down your throat. The bolus gets stuck in your pipes. The tendency is to grab a drink to wash it down. In order to digest the poorly chewed and diluted food, your body has to produce more digestive enzymes and juices which, in the long run, depletes your digestive system. Moreover, the transit time of your stool will be increased, as the body retains food longer to complete the digestive process. This results in putrefaction in the gut. Many chronically ill patients do not chew their food. Many obese people do not chew their food. If you don't believe it, go and sit in a restaurant and observe people eat. The best restaurants for conducting this observation are those which offer all-you-can-eat super buffets.

Let me suggest that you conduct some eating experiments on yourself. First, eat your food very fast and check the amount of saliva secreted. Then, eat your food at a slower pace and check your saliva level again. Third, eat your food in a mindful state and check your saliva level. Finally, eat your food in a mindful state with gratitude. You can determine whether the secretion of saliva is affected by your various approaches to chewing. Repeat the experiment as many times as you wish. If the result is reproducible, it is "science." You have just become a scientist conducting your own experiment without federal dollars. It's that simple! When you chew your food many times to liquefy it and feel gratitude or love, you will find the food not only tastes better, but is also easily digested and absorbed. The food nourishes you now!

Despite their importance, food and nutrients are not the most essential living element for human existence. The most essential element is oxygen, the primordial nutrient. Without it we would be lifeless within minutes. Another excellent nutrient to pair with oxygen is Love. Without love, even a state of being fully oxygenated is not enough. It has been well documented that incubator babies who received regular touch gained more weight than those received little or no touch.

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