

“INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE”

This most recently coined *p.c.* buzzword for what has been called complementary medicine, alternative medicine, holistic medicine, functional medicine, ancient wisdom, and other less appropriate terms, still remains an enigma to most people. So, what is it?!

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

*where conventional medicine and antiquated wisdom integrate themselves effortlessly
herbs, hernias, energy work, high blood pressure, reiki, alzheimer's, acupuncture, surgery,
homeopathy, colonoscopy, holding hands, leukemia, diet, back pain, exercise, arthritis,
massage, depression, cranio-sacral, cancer, hugs, hypothyroid, shamanism, fractures
taking responsibility to care for one's own body, mind, and soul
doing whatever it takes to heal on every level of existence
setting an intention of wellness, then achieving it
it takes time. it takes patience. it is not instant. it is painstaking
we have tools: doctors, pills, surgery, internet, prayer, herbs, meditation, acupuncture, diet . . .
there is help along the way. there is information, options and support
one decides what to endure, and what to improve
each one in charge of own health; each also held accountable for own health
no one can heal another. each heals oneself with assistance from others*

~ From a Collection of Anonymous, quotes taken out of context ☺

Integrative Medicine gives the chance for the cardio-thoracic surgeon and the didgeridoo musician to both have a role in the healing of a person. Both have their place and their purpose, one not more important than the other, each intending to help the patient with their talents.

We each have our own account of what brings us happiness. Whatever modality can help a person to achieve joy is a good thing. Does it really have to pass the rigors of scientific analysis to be believable? If it does no harm, why not let it do some good? The “Placebo Effect” has been dismissed as reason to invalidate a medication, but recently has been studied as the “power of a person’s mind to heal oneself”.

Which will bear itself out in the test of time? Why must there be a choice? Which is right? There is never any science fact, there is only science fiction. “Facts” are only accurate

for a given length of time. Is the world flat? Does the sun revolve around the Earth? A few hundred years ago you would have been executed for blasphemy to say otherwise. Newton was improved on by Einstein. Why can't there be a new biological energy force that we, as yet, can not fully explain by present day paradigms? What if "chi", "prana", "orgone energy", "life force", "living energy" actually does exist and obeys it's own set of laws, yet to be discerned?

But to deny its existence when there are so many rigorously conducted scientific studies that prove otherwise, is very close-minded. To think that we know every bit of medical and scientific data, and be so sure of our position that there can be no room for alternate theories is to cut ourselves off from growth. Intellectual, physical and spiritual growth, they all come to a dead stop. We no longer continue to evolve as a species.

Why is there such a conflict, such a resistance, such an "us" and "them" attitude, between doctors and metaphysicists? Each thinking the other is completely insane, each unwilling to budge even a little off the soap box. But the orthopedic surgeon gets great relief from his back pain from acupuncture, and the herbalist is grateful to the emergency medicine doctor for treating her heart attack.

People need both. People need to know that they have options. People need knowledgeable health care providers that can help them incorporate the best of both worlds. There need *not* be a choice between approaches, but an assimilation of all modalities. In a nearby hospital, surgical patients are offered Reiki to help them relax, and feel better. Most patients do take advantage of this highly studied technique which definitely lowers blood pressure, reduces pain and improves healing. Currently, withholding this service from a patient should actually be considered malpractice!

The great Greek Physician, Hippocrates, declared, "First, do no harm". He also believed that, "The physician merely amuses the patient while nature heals him". Integrative Medicine incorporates all reasonable modalities to assist the patient to heal themselves in every realm possible. It invites the patient's own thoughts and desires to guide treatment options; the patient is genuinely part of the healing process. The best of all worlds blend together in support of the patient to create their own healthy mind, body and spirit.

That is what Integrative Medicine means to me. This is who I am. This is what I do.

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