



Foundations of Health

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In a world of misinformation, I would like for you to look at Middle Path Medicine (MPM) as the source for unbiased information regarding healthcare. What separates us from the more famous newsletters and other integrative websites is that we are a team of integrative healthcare practitioners who research and actually treat our patients with the protocols that you find at Middle Path Medicine.

The following guidelines are intended to help you become your own best healer. As with all recommendations, it is your direct personal experiential knowingness of whatever healthcare practice you undertake that will guide you always in the direction of healing.

When it comes to guides on the healing path, MPM provides the only truly Integrative Wellness Center on the Central Coast of California. We actually practice integrative medicine because it is the best medicine, and it is our life vision, not because it is a popular fad.

Gary E. Foresman, M.D., Board Certified Internal Medicine Physician, Founder and Director of Middle Path Medicine balances the best of Western and natural medicine. He is a Fellow in both the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and Integrative Oncology. Our Chiropractor, **Bobby Maybee, D.C.**, brings care and empathy to his patients, and his skilled use of **Class IV K-Laser** adds a unique form of healing to our physical medicine practice. We are on the forefront of treatment with **Intravenous Nutrition Therapy**, providing a powerful form of therapy for healing, recovery, and rejuvenation. **Kathi Fennelly, NP**, adds her years of experience in **Women's Health** to our team, offering Bio Identical Hormone consultations as well as annual physical exams. Our **Supplement Shop** has a natural health pharmacy which allows anyone to purchase the best of supplements, usually at the best prices anywhere. Our website www.MiddlePathMedicine.com holds a vast wealth of knowledge, free to anyone who wants to better his or her wellness.

Depending on the complexity of your visit, we may or may not have time to discuss the basics of healing - that is why they are covered in detail in this document. Whatever symptom, whatever dis-ease, or whatever disease you may have, symptoms are our guide to aid us in making the best decisions for our health. Whenever you have a symptom, especially one that has become chronic, ask yourself "why"? Not with guilt, blame, or shame - but with that uniquely human spirit of inquiry. Treating symptoms without treating the cause truly represents "shooting the messenger." Symptom relief, although vital, often allows us to avoid inquiry and thus, knowingness.

Whatever the imbalance, the underlying problem usually lies within our diet, our exercise habits, and the all-encompassing world of stress. Happiness and health, one cultivates actively within one's own words and deeds, and is not a "happencance" occurrence as our language would imply. To maintain health takes a minimum of three hours per day of proactively healthy behaviors and to regenerate health can take much more. Whatever recommendations that follow, practice them. Then you will feel the effects or the side-effects based upon your experiential knowingness, and therefore *know* whether the intervention is right for you. Don't read about exercise, just exercise. Don't read about supplements, take them and experience them. Learning to trust your body, mind, and spirit once again is the most powerful form of healing I know.

Stress Reduction: This all-encompassing subject includes the quality of our relationships, our vocations and avocations, our spiritual outlook, our cultural conditioning and generally anything which affects our "point of view". "Stress" affects every health condition. The practice of stress-reduction, particularly meditation, is the **single most important health practice anyone can do**. Whatever practice one does that reproducibly brings your mind to silence allows you to directly experience the "Self." Stress-reduction is the natural consequence of Self Realization practices, truly a side-effect. This is why Self Realization/Stress Reduction is most important when we are not stressed at all. I recommend practicing 30 minutes of meditation twice per day as your most important health practice.

The two obstacles to American behavior are time and money. Meditation is free. Well, I am glad I handled that one! However, it is the value we place on "doing-ness"/masculinity which devalues "being-ness"/femininity in our society. One must put money into the bank to spend it. One must "be" to do. Providing the inner stroke of silence to balance the outer stroke of activity allows regeneration and healing to occur. We don't have the time to not meditate. In our culture we are taught to distract ourselves from stress through entertainment, drugs and alcohol, shopping, work - anything to step away from discomfort which may help us feel better for a while, but always prolong the underlying problem. Stepping into and not away from life, heals.

The practice is so easy, which is what makes it appear so difficult. One sits and practices whichever technique that reproducibly brings them to a sense of timelessness (see books below for options). The flow between whatever technique you choose and distractions - sounds in the environment, thoughts in the head, feelings in the body, is the practice of meditation. Sounds always occur because we live in this world, thoughts have to occur because you have a mind, and your body will provide a unique array of sensations because you have a body. **Effortless** □ the only effort it takes for meditation is to allow the time. Once one begins their practice, no effort is put into the system. **Nonjudgmental** □ any expectation for any occurrence or lack of occurrence is why we judge and therefore frustrate ourselves. Trust in the process, as every culture since the beginning of time has known that **this practice is the only path to health, happiness and freedom.**

For Primordial Sound Meditation visit www.soulcouncil.com

For Transcendental Meditation visit www.vediclife.biz

My most commonly recommended books about this subject include:

- *TRANSCEND*, Kurzweil and Grossman
- *True Meditation*, Adyashanti
- *The Unmanifest Self*, Ligia Dantes
- *The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook*, Martha Davis, PhD et al.
- *Wherever You Go There You Are*, Jon Kabat Zinn, PhD
- *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*, Deepak Chopra, MD
- *How to Know God*, Deepak Chopra, MD
- *Anatomy of Spirit*, Carolyn Myss, PhD
- *The Power of Now*, Eckhart Tolle, PhD
- *Marriage of Sense and Soul*, Ken Wilber, PhD

Most importantly, the practice of stress-reduction is not an intellectual experience, nor a religious experience. Praying is a wonderful healing practice, however it incorporates mental activity and thus is not a form of stress reduction, any more than eating right is a form of stress reduction. The Greek way of describing these practices is *trans-rational*, which means beyond rational thought. This is why one can't "think" their way to stress reduction. One of the great misunderstandings of our time comes from the attachment to the concept of "I think, therefore I am." Truly thinking is just something we do, and unfortunately it has become its own belief system. Learning to find the self beyond the myriad of thoughts enlivens, enriches and heals. To help

others experience their □spiritupsychophysicalness□ (Ms. Dantes) is what I mean when I discuss “healing” and “wholeness”.

Exercise: Average seven hours per week of exercise. In my practice one of the leading reasons for healthy aging is the incorporation of a regular exercise practice. The health benefits are myriad and the research unequivocal. We need more exercise. There are three types of fitness, each with equal yet unique and inter-related benefits.

- **Stretching Fitness:** the regular practice of yoga, tai chi, qi-gong or good old American stretching every day improves flexibility both mentally and physically, prevents cramping, improves balance, and allows one to maintain an exercise routine. The more exercise we practice, the more stretching we need. This especially applies as we grow older. Most of the daily aches and pains we experience can be prevented through a regular stretching program. www.centralcoastyoga.com
- **Aerobic Fitness:** the best form of exercise is the one you will do. Develop a schedule and stick to it. Ally with a friend, health-coach or trainer to help you maintain your program through the inevitable difficult times. In a world filled with people trying to improve their oxygenation through supplements, I find it paradoxical that the only proven methods, aerobic exercise, most of us don't incorporate regularly. Interval training where one exercises vigorously for even 2-5 minutes with 5 minute walking intervals for at least three cycles has been shown to vastly improve calorie burning over more monotonous routines. www.kennedyclubs.com
- **Resistance Training Fitness:** Weight bearing activity is essential for everyone. Especially as we age, the loss of lean body mass is one of the primary markers of poor aging. Whether through going to the gym, home exercise equipment, or just carrying some weights while walking, we will not maintain vitality without incorporating some form of resistance training into our weekly schedule.

Daily activity of course has a significant impact on physical capacity. Wearing a pedometer and insuring that you take 10,000 steps per day is yet another fine way to improve your vitality. Our bodies crave regular activity. You will find any health condition can improve with specific exercise guided by your physician or health coach.

Nutrition: Let's cover what we do know about nutrition. Remember, “Everything in moderation, especially moderation!” The “Orienting Generalizations”:

- **Eating Awareness:** learn to trust yourself again, not some supposed authority. Eat slowly, quietly, thoroughly and with great enjoyment. Whatever the food, if you find your body reacting negatively, stop at that moment. If you eat slowly, you will eat less. I find people so confused whether they should or shouldn't eat meat, combine certain foods – basically anything, and somehow think someone on the TV or even I can tell them how to eat. Only you can.
- **Eat Less:** The most common nutritional problem in America is overeating. I do not care in the least whether it is proteins, fats or carbs, we eat too much, period. The natural medicine saying, “My mouth is my juicer” - means chewing your food thoroughly will help you enjoy your food more and eat less. Juicing is a form of processing and is appropriate for treating some conditions, however it is a primary source for obesity when one gulps 24 ounces of any fruit juice.
- **Drink More Water:** Drink a minimum of 8-eight ounce glasses of filtered water per day. Allow yourself some herbal teas, try squeezing some lemon or lime into your water, or experience a myriad of different mineral waters. The primary cause of weight gain is liquid calories, whether it is from sodas, juices, or even diet sodas, which fool the body and increase appetite.
- **Eat More Whole Foods:** The best nutritional system would be the advice to eat the way we did prior to the advent of processing foods. If it comes in a box or a wrapper, eat as little of it as you can. Eat a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, preferably locally grown and organic. Get in the habit of shopping regularly, preparing fresh food that you buy and consume every few days.

- Eat More Good Fats: The low-fat diet lead directly to the consumption of more processed carbohydrates and the burgeoning obesity and diabetes epidemic. The misconception that fats are bad for you amazingly persists, especially with the physicians in our society. Healthy fats that come from fish, nuts, olive oil, avocados and flax prevent heart disease, not cause it! If you eat meat, choose the leanest portions possible and eat in moderation.
- The 80/20 Rule: Whatever system of nutrition that you apply in your life, allow yourself “cheats.” If you can stay 80% on your program and 20% “cheat”, you will stick with it for the long-term. Any system of nutrition focused on what you can't do, will never work. Also note that any system that relies on you counting anything, whether calories or grams of anything, has never worked long-term.
- Avoiding the Artificial: If you are thinking of eating anything man-made that is substituting for something found in nature, it will always be worse than what you are substituting for. Specifically, margarine is 10 times worse for you than butter, non-dairy creamer may be the vilest substance ever made, and artificial sweeteners are always worse than natural sweeteners. In fact, consumption of artificial sweeteners is associated with weight gain. Since people eat sugar substitutes solely to lose weight, there can't possibly be any benefit to them, so why do we still consume them?
- Coffee: Listen to your body. If drinking coffee makes your irritable, stop drinking it. However, avoiding coffee because it is “bad” is directly controverted by medical research. Coffee in moderation (1-2 cups per day) helps prevent diabetes, Parkinson's, liver disease, has many powerful antioxidants, and has never been proven to cause any illness.
- Alcohol: If you have an alcohol problem, stop drinking altogether. However, drinking 5-7 alcoholic drinks per week has been shown to lead to a 40% reduction in heart disease, stroke, dementia and is also associated with a lower risk of certain cancers. I believe the idea that eliminating alcohol and coffee found so common in “natural health books” truly is a reflection of our country's Puritanical heritage. Most people suspect that if it feels good, it has to be bad for you. Disease comes from thinking that more is better, however. Always listen to your body. If you don't feel well after drinking alcohol, stop drinking ~ everything in moderation.
- Silent Killers: The flavor enhancer MSG is hidden in so many foods and acts as an excitotoxin causing brain damage. Hydrogenated (partially or otherwise) oils, trans fatty acids, kills between 50,000 to 100,000 Americans per year, each and every year, yet our FDA allows them to be part of our food. Read food labels carefully. Our misguided public gets scared by the FDA and pharmaceutical industry into fearing herbs and vitamins while allowing for these kinds of atrocities.

I know you are going to read books and newsletters that will continue to mislead you. Each and every book that I have read has some truths in it. As long as you read with an open mind and do not take any of these sources to be the “food bible”, here are some good sources of information that may guide you to a way of eating that you haven't experienced before.

- Eat Right For Your Type, Peter J. D'Adamo, ND
- The China Study, T. Colin Campbell, PhD
- The Zone, Barry Sears, PhD
- The South Beach Diet, Arthur Agatston, MD

Eat slowly and enjoy your foods. Experience and stop thinking so much!

I know that the principle of three hours per day (an hour per day for self-realization/stress-reduction, exercise, and nutrition) of proactively healthy behaviors may seem a daunting task. Whatever time you do spend will be well worth it.

-- Gary E. Foresman, MD

More articles and information can be found on Middle Path Medicine's website:

www.MiddlePathMedicine.com