

# Health and the Magic of Wholeness

**SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO US ALL IN THE LAST CENTURY OR SO.**

We don't notice it, but in terms of staying well and happy, it's hurting us badly. If you throw a frog into really hot water, the frog jumps out. But heat the water slowly, and it doesn't react until it's too late. Creeping change fools the frog. And creeping change has fooled us as well. In terms of health and happiness, there's what you might call a "whole-self wellness wagon." And little by little, we've slipped right off of it.

It started, I suppose, when we went to cars, and with them, to assembly line thinking. Break the job into little pieces, focus one worker on just that little piece, and have him or her do it *ad infinitum*. It's the fastest way to produce the same automobile over and over again. But for the worker in those conditions, the functioning car as a whole system got lost. The felt and understood coherence of how all the parts fit and work together disappeared. "Not my job," as they say. And it became easier to think of ourselves the same way. "I just drive it... ho hum... various different mechanics keep it working."

But imagine that what's moving along that assembly line is your own health and happiness. You slide past a whole bunch of workstations where mechanics measure each little body part. Here for your stomach, there for your joints, another for your skin, then one for your eyes only. These specialists know the good and the bad numbers for each and every organ, and keep careful track of them. Adjust the pressure in your blood vessels, turn down any overheated feelings, pop in a flu vaccine—and away you go. As long as you keep those numbers in line—you're fine. Though perhaps, you're not.

Thing is, those workstations aren't coordinated. What one expert wants for his (your) organ can often conflict with what another wants for his (your) bones. Eat fish for the Omega's says one; no don't, says another—the heavy metals will get you. Take a drug to bring that down, says one mechanic, but then another has to give you pills for the side effects. The truth is, the whole ballgame comes down to a really sizable series of complicated, tricky judgment calls. And the isolated, assembly line approach doesn't begin to address those various trade-offs and compromises.

Well if it's all so complex, how did we ever survive so long? To understand that, we not only have to put the



car back together—we also have to understand it in that older, really different way. If you think about it, there was never a time when you were in pieces. No one and nothing ever "assembled" you. You grew as a viable whole from the moment the sperm hit your mother's egg. As open-minded researchers refine what this "wholeness" means, it takes on a deeper meaning

than just nerves and chemicals sending signals around your body.

It's a scientific fact, for example, that every kind of molecule anywhere absorbs and radiates its own characteristic pattern of electromagnetic vibrations. Since quantum physicists figured out how to measure these very miniscule energies coming out of human organs and bones and tissue—it's become apparent that every cell in the body is bathed in radiations coming from every other cell. It seems more likely now that every part of the body knows instantaneously what every other part is doing. When you have a wound that heals, the gash in the flesh grows back to the way it was because all the cells around it remember what it felt like to have whole nerves and blood vessels and skin next to them. The wholeness around the wound restores wholeness to it.

We don't have good words for this, so let me call this wholeness an "emotional-body-mind." This emotional-body-mind—that is you—is the only thing in the universe that can simultaneously compute all the tricky trade-offs that keep you well and happy. A doctor would need to model you personally on huge supercomputers to even get started at this job. Really expensive medicine acknowledges this. You can go to something like the Mayo clinic and have a whole team of different specialists try to put your Humpty Dumpty together again. But good luck with the payments.

But there's another approach as well. It's inexpensive, low-tech, and it's worked for tens of thousands of years. It means using your felt intuitions and intelligence to have an ongoing conversation with the indivisible emotional-body-mind you actually are. When you maintain strong passions and social relationships in life, supported by natural foods and some exercise—there is an integrity and coherence to YOU that remains stable, despite all sorts of slightly or sometimes even drastically "bad numbers." Even more important, when you do get sick, it's that resilient wholeness, far more than any drugs that remembers how to put you back together. ▲