

Blending the Best of Western and Alternative Medicine

By Dr. Stephen P. Weiss, Holistic Medical Doctor/Classical Homeopath



Although the last several articles I have written for *Living Natural* have all been about the dramatic results I often see using Classical Homeopathy, every day in private practice I rely heavily on the skills I learned during my four years in Medical School & three years in Family Practice Residency.

Many of my patients consult me because they also want a health care practitioner who has completed the long and rigorous training required to be a Board Certified Medical Doctor. They seek a holistic physician who can order blood work, X-rays, MRIs etc.....to properly diagnose their problem and who has the experience and expertise to guide them on their sometimes frightening journey toward health. They like that I can and do prescribe antibiotics and other drugs, albeit sparingly, when absolutely necessary.

In Santa Fe, while building my private practice in Holistic Medicine, I worked weekends as the only doctor of a busy Urgent Care Center, seeing as many as 40 patients a day. Although sometimes I cursed those long days and the frenzied rushing from room to room that made me feel, and probably look, like Kramer (think *Seinfeld*), I am now extremely grateful for the experience because I see how it dramatically improved my clinical skills and confidence as a physician.

Every seven years, in order to remain Board Certified, I have had to take a six hour national Family Practice exam which tests my knowledge in every aspect of Western Medicine. I'm pleased to say I have sat and passed the exam three times so far, the last being in 2004.

The beautiful thing about the practice of medicine is that hard work doesn't just get you another diploma on the wall; it literally transforms lives, or saves them as the case may be. I'd like to share with you two examples of the impact my Western medical training has had on patients' lives.

Approximately 10 years ago, while I was playing the role of Kramer in a real life sitcom, I rushed into a consultation room at the Urgent Care Center in Santa Fe and found a woman lying on the exam table who was visibly ill. Although she was suffering from fevers and chills, symptoms I had treated on a daily basis, she appeared more sickly than the other patients I had seen with influenza. Her mention of an enlarged lymph node under her arm also piqued my interest. As I was examining her I noticed two insect bites on her arm which stood out. Suspecting Bubonic Plague, a disease I had read about but never seen, I immediately paged an infectious disease colleague who concurred with my presumptive diagnosis. The patient was rushed to the hospital, and after obtaining several blood cultures, immediately started on IV antibiotics. Her blood cultures grew out *Yersinia pestis*, which means that the plague had become a systemic infection, known as septicemic plague. It is fatal in up to 40% of patients who receive proper antibiotic therapy, and in 100% of those who are untreated because of failure to make the proper diagnosis. This often happens because the early stages of the disease so closely resemble the flu & other common, self limiting illnesses. Fortunately, she made a complete and rapid recovery and was discharged in several days.

Paula is a 58 year old woman who first consulted me last April.

In the early 1980s, she completed 2 years of Medical School, and then decided to switch careers. "My brain is fractured, she said. I'm slow, stupid, confused. I put something down in front of me and I can't find it. I go to open a zipper bag and I move my hand the wrong way. I can add, but I can't subtract, multiply or divide. I can't remember my home phone number or my age. I'm having a constant conversation with myself. Both parents want to admit me to a psychiatric hospital. Amidst all her mental confusion, she had stopped taking her thyroid medication 6 months prior. Although her neurological exam was normal, I ordered an MRI of her brain, restarted her thyroid medication, and sent her to the lab for blood work.

Paula's PCP refused to order the MRI, saying he needed a good reason to order it! I picked up the phone and gave him a call. I wanted to give him a piece of my mind, but instead told him Paula's mind was in pieces, and that the severity of her mental status changes warranted the expensive test. He agreed to get the MRI, pending approval from his boss. When Paula's condition did not improve after being back on her thyroid for 6 weeks and after a B12/Bcomplex shot, I pulled out my trusty ace in the hole- homeopathic medicine. She returned 13 days later literally a different person, and filled me in on the changes she had experienced since starting the remedy *Plum bum*:

"I've been sick for 1 ½ years. This is the first time I've noticed REAL progress. I'm no longer an Alzheimer's patient—I'd do something and 5 minutes later not remember what I'd done. I'd leave the front door wide open and go to sleep. I'd store unopened cans in the fridge, and milk in the cupboard. It's all coming back to me. I couldn't remember how to unscrew a lid. Now my brain is dramatically improved. I can do research again. I went from a Kindergarten level to a High School level."

Paula's MRI showed a walnut-sized tumor from one of the sheaths surrounding her brain pressing on the right front lobe. She was very clear that she wanted it surgically removed, so she consulted Dr. Turner, a neurosurgeon at UNMH, who operated on

8-2-07. She sailed through the surgery, and left the hospital in 48 hours with the help of homeopathic remedies. The pathology report indicated it was a meningioma, a benign tumor.

On 8-7-07, she was in my office beaming with delight, and with a new look which included a row of staples across her scalp. "I'm so excited, I could happy dance. This whole thing has been a miracle. I was mentally back to myself the minute I came out of surgery – the first time in five years. I'm just so thankful I met you when I did. If I hadn't come to see you, I don't know what would have happened to me." I'm not sure either, but I'd venture to take a guess. Another unassuming individual saved from the clutches of your neighborhood psych hospital or nursing home.

Stephen P. Weiss, M.D. specializes in Holistic/Integrative Medicine at his private practice in Albuquerque. A Board Certified Family Physician; he is the former owner and Medical Director of the Treehouse Center of Integrative Medicine. Dr. Weiss has appeared on local and national TV and radio and has lectured at U.S. Medical Schools on Integrative Medicine.