



## HEALTH MINISTRY

### Journey to Wellness

Many of us, by the time we become quite elderly, have been treated for cancers – breast, lung, kidney, G.I., etc. and heart diseases. It is a blessing that modern medicine can do battle with these diseases and extend life spans. Sometimes there is an actual cure. Other times disease goes into remission and we move on as survivors. With diseases such as estrogen and progesterone dependent breast cancer, the treatment is more than the initial surgery, radiation, and chemo. In many cases the hormonal therapy medications that block hormones are given daily for 5 to 10 years. These meds come with an array of side effects which can be challenging to live with. As they keep the breast cancer at bay, they can unbalance the body and can cause other conditions such as osteoporosis and heart damage which are then treated with other meds. It's a catch 22. No free lunch. You have to weigh the benefits versus the risks. Often your life is in the balance so you endure the risks and deal with them as you go. The reason women are living longer after breast cancer is because of early diagnosis and the treatments now available. It's the getting your body back in balance after treatment that is the tricky part.

This is where other treatment modalities come into play. I believe, like many others, that our bodies have the ability to heal themselves if they are allowed to. The holistic approach helps promote this. Self-healing strategies such as yoga, tai chi, acupuncture, acupressure, massage, reflexology, chiropractic, meditation, guided imagery, being in the moment, etc. can help promote wellness. Do your body a favor and do stretches and deep breathing after getting out of bed in the morning. They help limber you up and get your moving. They should become a habit. Your body will thank you! I recommend Nancy Townsend's yoga and tai chi classes. I'm taking tai chi with her. These learned movements and breathing patterns should be incorporated into your wellness routine to use every day.

What is Holistic healing? Holistic healing is the practice of health and wellness that considers the entire person and all the internal and external factors affecting them. It seeks to maintain and restore balance rather than concentrating on a specific illness. It's mind, body, spirit wellness. It touches and connects all aspects of life. Holistic healing allows us to take responsibility for our own well being as it empowers us. Medicine evolved from it. Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, was a believer in self-healing and the healing power of nature. Alternative medicine, complementary therapies, holistic practice, natural medicine, and integrative medicine are all very similar and fall outside of the pharmacy and surgical treatments. When these are used in conjunction with conventional therapies, you get the best of both worlds.

As we pursue holistic healing which brings harmonious balance to our lives, we will connect with our environment and nature, eat and drink with our focus on wellness, exercise with a rhythm to reduce stress and tension and promote relaxation, sleep enough to restore ourselves, manage our digestive processes, and engage in our passions. Add these practices to your life's journey to restore your harmony and balance, which will lead you to a healthier and better life.

Enjoy the beauty of Autumn. If you have issues with shorter days and decreased light, start using your therapy light in the morning.

Blessings,  
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