

**YOUR BODY IS SPEAKING.**

**ARE YOU LISTENING?**

**How to Rewire Both the Brain and the Body,  
Release Your Emotions and Rewrite Your Story!**

**By**

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College**

## Introduction

Twenty years ago, I lay in hospital with Stage 4 cancer. A crew of concerned nurses hovering around me insisting that my only choice was a hysterectomy. I had three children. If I wanted to raise them, removing part of my body was my only reasonable option. I had already signed the documents. Theater stood ready and waiting.

Yet, somehow, I couldn't ignore the hot knot in my chest telling me this surgery would be the mistake of my life. It went against my core health values as a naturopathic physician and a self-aware human being.

An hour later, I walked out of the oncology hospital.

That pivotal moment saved my life. While that kind of surgery might be helpful for some people convinced that removing an organ removes the cancer, that path was not for me.

Seven years earlier, a life-altering experience had caused a complete shift in my perspective on healing. Not only did I believe this new perspective, but I had founded my medical practice on it and seen it work "miracles" again and again.

That shift began with a simple, painless treatment on my knees. Minutes into the treatment, I suddenly found myself back in my crib, gazing up at mobile airplanes twirling above me and howling in the voice of a two-year-old. I could not turn over, and I felt the full fury of a frustrated, helpless child.

After the treatment on my knees that flashback stayed with me. I couldn't get it out of my mind. Later, I called my mother to ask if my waking dream could be an old memory. She replied,

“Yes. The doctor told us you needed to use shoes with a bar across them. I still have those cute little shoes.”

Pronation-correction therapy was common for children in that era. I had no conscious memory of that time, but my experience came back to me in full force when someone gently touched my knees.

That event changed my entire view of the relationship between the mind and the body. In that moment I realized the body stores unprocessed memories and trauma until the person is ready to release them.

That moment also changed the direction of my medical practice when I integrated this understanding into BowenFirst™ Therapy which led to my founding Bowen College.

I chose to walk out of the oncology clinic because I knew down to my core that my body wanted to heal, and—if I listened—my body would tell me the truth about the real issues happening within me.

Three decades and thousands of patients later, I’m here to say the key to healing is straightforward and uncomplicated. Reconnect to your spirit and develop a warm, accepting relationship with your body. Too often, we see the body as an adversary because we have pain or discomfort. The body speaks when we are ready to listen with loving connection. Be at peace with your thoughts and comfortable with emotions flowing through you. Have meaningful exchanges with others and inspire future generations. This calmer, gentler life will flood your system with high doses of love and gratitude and give you far-reaching positive consequences both in your health and your quality of life.

My mission is to spread this message until we have a healer in every household and a population of healthcare providers banding together in a global healing movement. These

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concepts are profoundly simple. Read them slowly and absorb them. They could save the life of your family member or your loved one, or even yourself.

## Chapter 1

### Being Healthy

What does it mean to be healthy? Before I entered training to become a naturopathic physician, I'd always assumed the answer to that question was a given. Ask any child and their answer will probably be something like, "Healthy means feeling good." Yet, good health is so much more than that.

The ancient Chinese believed a healthy body meant a strong flowing life force called *chi*. Ancient tribes, such as Native American culture, viewed health and wellbeing as intrinsically linked to spirituality.<sup>1</sup> Traditional writings in India show their definition of perfect health as "a balance between body, mind, spirit, and social wellbeing,"<sup>2</sup> and they extend balance to include a person's environment and relationships. Even today, residents of areas called Blue Zones<sup>3</sup> have special vitality, many living past 100 years old, still fully functioning with their minds clear and strong. All of these groups focus on feeling balanced and energized with a clear mind.

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Koithan and Cynthia Farrell, "Indigenous Native American Healing Tradition" in *Journal Nurse Pract.*  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2913884/>

<sup>2</sup> Guha, "What Is The Philosophy of Ayurvedic Medicine?" <https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/what-philosophy-ayurvedic-medicine>

<sup>3</sup> Buettner, *The Blue Zone: 2nd Edition*  
[https://www.amazon.com/Blue-Zones-Second-Lessons-Longest/dp/1426209487/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=2KFOY5V8FETMZ&keywords=blue+zones+by+dan+buettner&qid=1566114528&s=gateway&sprefix=blue+zones%2Caps%2C128&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Blue-Zones-Second-Lessons-Longest/dp/1426209487/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2KFOY5V8FETMZ&keywords=blue+zones+by+dan+buettner&qid=1566114528&s=gateway&sprefix=blue+zones%2Caps%2C128&sr=8-1)

The World Health Organization agrees that health is “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”<sup>4</sup>

Over the years, Western medicine has inspected, dissected and fragmented that simple answer until our modern society puts less and less focus on feelings of well-being and more and more emphasis on statistics and norms. They create an avatar of sickness and all that it means. Anything outside of that avatar is considered normal, a vague concept that settles for the idea of good enough. Only when someone’s condition falls within certain numerical levels do they merit intervention. How the person feels comes second to that standard.

Within that framework, all activities focus on identifying sickness and finding remedies. This focus on disorders and maladies make us forget what it’s like to have a calm body, a clear mind and an energized being. We forget the body's natural state is health. When balanced emotionally, physically, mentally and spiritually, the body feels vital and alive without pain or restraint. This is the default setting on our physical being. This is the place we want to come back to whenever we get jostled off center—which some people call dis-ease.

“The body's natural state is health.”

Feeling healthy is different from normal blood work and tests. These three states have a massive gap between them: illness, normal according to lab results and the natural state of feeling well.

In the 1500s a philosopher named René Descartes described the mind and body as two separate parts with the barest of interactions, such as the mind telling the arm to lift or the legs to

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<sup>4</sup> 8fit Team, “The World Health Organization: Definition of Health” <https://8fit.com/lifestyle/the-world-health-organization-definition-of-health/>

walk. Called *dualism*, this philosophy led to treating disease as a mechanical problem of the body with no impact from the mind or emotions at all.<sup>5</sup>

Over time, medical researchers studied the bodies of deceased people to learn about the origin, nature and course of disease, known as *pathology*.<sup>6</sup> They believed a physician's purpose is to eradicate disease. As medicines and procedures developed, eradicating symptoms gradually took center stage instead, and the definition of healing became largely relief of symptoms.

For example, inflammation is the body's way of sending up a red flag about a problem. The individual could have an infection, some type of local damage, or even a stress-related condition. The inflammation is a clanging bell, urging the person to find a solution. Taking anti-inflammatories does not eliminate the source of the problem, only the warning about the problem. It's like turning off a ringing fire alarm with a sigh of relief that the problem is resolved—while the building burns down around you.

The same is true for antacids, beta blockers, statins, sleep aids, and hundreds of other commonly used pharmaceuticals—each with its list of side effects and warnings that can go on for several pages folded in with a prescription.

This emphasis on taking away discomfort becomes a habit until often the root cause is not addressed, just the symptoms masked. On the other hand, any intervention (including pharmaceuticals) that gives the body a temporary break from pain will allow the body to kick back into gear. What we really need is a fuller understanding of how to work with our bodies to support healing. Instead of blaming our doctors for prescribing insulin for Stage 2 Diabetes, we need to take a deeper look at why we may be developing those symptoms.

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<sup>5</sup> The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Mind-body dualism" <https://www.britannica.com/topic/mind-body-dualism>

<sup>6</sup> Medical terms in italics are defined in the Glossary.

One of my students, I'll call Larisa, has a Bachelor's degree in nutrition. She found herself in a similar situation with her patient, Fred. Larisa could have worked with the fascia and helped reduce his symptoms of neuropathy, but Fred would not have experienced lasting benefit from that line of treatment. Instead, she focused on her patient's diet. Up until then, Fred had avoided fat and meat to lose weight. However, he did not appreciate the difference between green vegetables, pasta and grains. As far as he was concerned, all three were low fat and vegetarian. Once she educated him and gave him a clear plan, his condition improved.

Today, we have a wide range of options and potential solutions for our health. All the complementary modalities have a role to play. Now is the time to get wise on what our body needs. When healing is slow or delayed, we can try new methods to bring our powerful healing system back to its natural state of health.

For humans, a regular program of outside measurements (known as the yearly checkup) keeps everyone informed on whether or not we show signs of disease, but this assessment in no way measures our overall level of health. While regular checkups are a good practice, focusing only on whether test results fall within normal ranges means some people who might feel miserable still won't find relief simply because their numbers aren't extreme enough to merit treatment.

Today's test results are mostly set up to detect full blown pathology, not catch disease-in-the-making. For example, diabetes takes years to create havoc in the body and the arteries. The disease will continue to ravage the person unhindered until their numbers reach a certain level. In other words, they have to get sick enough to merit help.

The general attitude today is that a healthy body is something to work hard for and obsess over...with little hope of actually getting there. If your blood pressure numbers are okay, your



cholesterol might be up. If your blood sugar is balanced, your PSA number might be high or your testosterone low. That's the tightrope we walk these days. It's rare to walk out of a doctor's office with a perfect A+ on your yearly test, especially if you're over fifty.

As we have a mechanical approach to healthcare quite similar to the operation of a vehicle where a computer monitors the oil pressure, tire pressure and the function of the operating parts, we often forget that it is our whole that is affected first and it is our whole that needs attention. Relying on fixing the parts or fixating on lab numbers to "resolve" underlining problems can be quite misleading.

But what if they don't have good information? What if they work hard, yet still don't see improvement? This was the case with Fred, who really believed he was doing all he could to improve his diabetes. His cholesterol levels went down a bit, but his insulin went up. His doctor was happy about the cholesterol, but was not aware of how to help his patient outside of insulin. This wasn't the failing of his doctor, but rather a result of a system where most medical colleges only offer eleven hours of nutrition training, where funding comes from private pharmaceutical enterprises.<sup>7</sup>

This is the frustration of many people with high cholesterol, diabetes, and similar issues. Often, these people excuse themselves with a story about their weak family history, or they might even sink into despair because they feel like a failure.

Due to the time constraints and systemic problems with how mainstream medicine is delivered, well-meaning doctors have no time to give their patients personal care, although they would like to. Patients can often feel disapproval or judgement after a rushed visit, and they can become hopeless about their prospects for recovery.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/5738386/canadian-medical-school-funding/>

In a system where the experts are revered and held as authority, we as patients need to take back our responsibility for our own wellbeing. Of course, medical doctors are trained to give us their knowledge and expertise, but we create the environment for its application to our body. The same is true if a complimentary health professional makes you feel inadequate for not following their expertise.

Pharmacies on every corner sell drugs for physical pain, drugs for mental pain and drugs to counter the side-effects of the drugs people are taking. What if the best pharmacy resides inside us? What if we have an innate healing capability that's always available and eager to go to work.

#### Case Study: Tourette's Child

An introverted nine-year-old child, Danny (not his real name) was very creative. He spent hours in his room drawing and playing with his pet turtle. His mother suffered from panic attacks and *Obsessive Compulsive Disorder* (OCD).

Danny washed his hands compulsively, but whether he did it as learned behavior or whether it was an internal urge was difficult to determine. When he started sniffing, his doctor prescribed allergy medications, thinking Danny had seasonal allergies. The "allergies" continued despite the medication.

His mother described Danny as a worried child, fretting when his parents left the house, anxious that something might happen to them in their absence.

While playing with his siblings, he would have impulsive behaviors, such as ripping the toys out of his sister's hands and throwing them across the room. He would break down the

Lego® structure his brother built and place all the pieces in a size-sequential order. If he found a piece was missing or misplaced, he would go into a state of loud, inconsolable crying.

When I first saw Danny at my office, he had an uncomfortable spastic cough. He hid the cough by slightly raising his voice, so that it appeared intentional. This had been going on for a year. His chest had a frequent twitch, and he was self-conscious about taking his shirt off. Embarrassed, his mother shared that when Danny was in his room, she could hear him barking.

From the family history and with the current symptoms, the diagnosis was clear: Tourette's Syndrome. Tourette's Syndrome has no blood, laboratory or imaging tests to confirm a diagnosis. In most cases, tic symptoms tend to decrease with age. However, this condition affects the nervous system and can also create negative behaviors, such as OCD<sup>8</sup>, generalized anxiety, panic attacks, and mood swings. These can interfere with the person's ability to function in adult life.

The family's General Practitioner had warned Danny's mother that prescription medication for this condition has a strong chance of complications. In fact, long-term use could cause a whole new set of involuntary movements called *tardive dyskinesia*. Stopping the medication once he started taking it could cause withdrawal symptoms that would make his involuntary movements much worse.<sup>9</sup> In any event, medication to stop the tics would not relieve his anxiety or OCD behavior.

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<sup>8</sup> Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

<sup>9</sup> Office of Communications and Public Liaison, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, and National Institutes of Health, "Tourette Syndrome Fact Sheet"

"Discontinuing neuroleptics after long-term use must be done slowly to avoid rebound increases in tics and withdrawal dyskinesias. One form of dyskinesia called tardive dyskinesia is a movement disorder distinct from TS that may result from the chronic use of neuroleptics." (<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/Patient-Caregiver-Education/Fact-Sheets/Tourette-Syndrome-Fact-Sheet>)

At hearing this from her family doctor, Danny's mother felt hopeless. Waiting for Danny's symptoms to lessen as he became an adult meant nearly ten more years of misery for the entire family. She was also concerned about how kids at school avoided him or bullied him. Without some change, Danny would miss out on the sleepovers, the camping trips and all the fun things associated with childhood. She decided to get an alternative perspective.

My examination showed Danny's *TMJ*<sup>10</sup>—the jaw joint in front of the ear—had a serious misalignment that was affecting his bite and the nerves in the area. Along with other complimentary medical treatment, I had five appointments with Danny over five months to relieve the affected nerves and activate his internal healing capabilities. At nine years old, his return to health happened quickly. Not only did all of Danny's Tourette's symptoms disappear, so did his OCD behavior. After that, I ended up treating his mother, so she no longer suffered from panic attacks.

Even under the grimmest of circumstances, people have an innate knowing that recovery is possible. I experienced this firsthand with my own Stage 4 cancer. I learned how to reboot the recover-and-renew program naturally running inside my body. In over thirty years of practice, I've witnessed the recovery of patients with *PTSD*<sup>11</sup> who went on to have a life filled with joy and hope. These people trusted their connection to their own sacred body. They learned to listen.

However, before people can listen, they must connect to the body and understand its language. These simple principles show why listening works:

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<sup>10</sup> Temporomandibular Joint

<sup>11</sup> Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

1. The body never lies. It creates symptoms to alert the person that something is off balance.
2. The body has its own timing. When overwhelming events happen, the body stores these memories and traumas until the person is ready to process and release them.
3. The body is smarter than we realize. It is programmed to heal, and people have the power to assist it. Simply deciding to work with the body rather than fight it, coerce it and suppress it will change the outcome. When people take responsibility and have tools to support their own healing, their ability to have full health and well-being will follow.

“Solutions are already inside the body.”

It is time to stop looking for quick fixes that don't attend to the real cause of the problem. The solutions are already inside the body, ready and waiting for encouragement. Pain and restraint open an opportunity to self-reflect and ask the deeper questions about where the imbalances lie.

When I was younger, I had scoliosis. For eight years I went to a chiropractor three times a week. I did find relief, but only temporarily. Several times a day I would lie on the floor to ease my back pain or grind my shoulder blade into every corner I came to.

Eventually, somebody told me "go see this person." After two treatments, my spine completely straightened out. I was pain free. After that, I became fascinated with the innate intelligence of the body. Often, a person's biggest limitation is simply in realizing what's possible. When someone believes the answer lies inside a prescription bottle, they stop looking

for more information. With curiosity to continue seeking, they might find a way back to balance and feeling fully alive.

### Case Study: Post-Surgery Damage

Edward stood more than 6 feet 5 inches tall, but when I first saw him, he seemed much shorter. His head was hanging down so low he could hardly make eye contact. He told me the story about 7 years earlier when he had brain surgery to remove a tumor. The surgery had lasted more than eight hours.

When he awakened afterward, he had terrible pain in his neck and felt as though his head were disconnected from his body. He felt like he had a massive weight on the back of his shoulders and neck to the point he had difficulty walking. His balance was precarious to the point he felt dizzy all the time. This condition continued, and Edward found no help or hope for his full recovery for more than seven years, this despite the fact that he was a surgeon himself.

His initial treatment took place on May 31. I chose a method of kinesthetic myofascial manipulation that uses gentle touch to allow the body to release the continuous loop of pain and restriction. In cases of trauma, the body will restrict movement to protect the injury, but the restriction sometimes lasts longer than the injury and creates a problem of its own. This was the case with Edward.

After one week, he reported 40-50% improvement, with more energy. A week later, after our second treatment, his pain was much improved with better balance and he started to feel able to control his neck and shoulder muscles. After the fourth treatment (one month after we first met) Edward was back to driving for the first time in seven years, and his pain was minimal. He

came in for eight treatments total. By August 14, Edward was back to his normal life—no pain, no dizziness, full range of motion, and his energy back to his pre-op state.

“The body repairs and renews in ways that seem miraculous when we support it and encourage it.”

Edward had full recovery without medication and without stressing the body from extreme measures. When I asked him if he would share his good news with his colleagues, he simply shrugged and said: “There is no point, they would not understand.”

That case study with Edward was twenty years ago. Today, the approach to supporting health and wellness has changed. Complementary medicine is filling a much-needed gap. Many medical doctors are relieved by this movement toward greater self-governance. Holism is part of a paradigm shift affecting many disciplines. These are exciting times.

As we saw with Edward, the body repairs and renews in ways that seem miraculous when we support it and encourage it. This is the most powerful truth we will ever find for our personal well-being.

During my Master’s program in law, I studied the interplay between law and medicine. I felt sickened by the politics, the agendas and power struggles in the legal field. At that point, I realized the judicial system is not about justice the same as conventional medicine is not about wellness. I saw the conventional approach delivering misinformation, unproven claims based on unverified assumptions, and confusing (often contradicting) solutions that are more tightly linked to financial opportunities than to health. To me, that system was profiting from the treatment of ongoing suffering rather than supporting wellness.

My experience with scoliosis had opened my eyes to the possibilities. I had a profound sense that the most empowering thing people could do is to learn about their own body: how it works, what it needs, and how it could thrive. I decided to start over and become a board-certified naturopathic physician. I made a commitment to offering real solutions. I set my course toward empowering people to govern their own health.

“Health is a matter of integrity.”

### The Key to Wellness

What I found after years of study is that the body’s innate intelligence is the key to wellness. Health is a matter of integrity. The moment people go out of integrity with life, that person become at risk in their health. The answer isn’t in vitamins or foods or marathons. Health is a state of resilience where an individual navigates through the challenges and finds joy in daily life. This is a wellness-focused perspective where the whole body and the whole life come into the equation.

### Case Study: Rheumatoid Arthritis

Mary came to me in great pain. Four years before, she had a diagnosis of Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) that was affecting her knees, hands and elbows. Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune condition, which means it's caused by the immune system attacking healthy body tissue. That’s much different than localized inflammation in a joint. Numerous factors—whether genetics, systemic, emotional, physical or environmental—can trigger Rheumatoid Arthritis by disrupting the function of the immune system.

On talking with Mary, I discovered that her husband had passed away shortly before her symptoms began. While in deep grief from her loss, she had to figure out what to do with his business which involved a snarl of legal issues. At the same time, she had to manage the family



tasks he used to take care of. Mary became overwhelmed. She started waking up with night sweats. She often felt weak and fatigued and had other signs of physical and emotional distress. That's when her pain started as well.

Conventional medicine says RA cannot be cured.<sup>12</sup> Patients receive instructions to take their meds and try to make the best of things as they continue to search for answers on Google. Mary had followed that path for more than 4 years when she came to me.

While tissue damage can indeed be permanent in some cases—such as enlarged joints—my experience with RA has been that the patient's pain and inflammation isn't necessarily permanent. Because I treat every person holistically, I asked her to tell me her story about what was happening in her life when she first noticed the inflammation. Addressing what triggers or offsets the immune system not only benefits the way the patient feels, but also offers information for other modalities to help the immune system, such as homeopathy.

For Mary, her intense stress levels after her husband's death had reached the point of destabilizing her immune system and giving rise to her inflammation. Five years later, she still had not finished grieving. By taking her complete focus off the RA and considering her life holistically, she was able to gain a new perspective. This was her first step on the road to healing.

She was now ready to address the source of her discomfort.

While she went through the system of treatment, Mary also found a way to accept her new normal. She realized how overwhelmed and confused her body was, and she began treating her body in kinder ways. In a few months, Mary's symptoms completely disappeared. She had

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<sup>12</sup>"To date, rheumatoid arthritis is not a curable disease." ANRF, "What is Rheumatoid Arthritis?" <https://curearthritis.org/rheumatoid-arthritis/>

developed no joint deformity during her illness, so she felt no lasting effects from her experience with RA.

As with Mary, the answers to our maladies lie within us. At some level, each individual has an intuition that more information, more solutions and hope are out there. Stories circulate about spontaneous remissions and all kinds of turnarounds. Everyone hopes they or their sick loved one might beat the odds. They are ready to take charge because it's the right time.

In my own path, dealing with Stage 4 cancer is not an experience I would wish on anyone. Navigating my way back to health meant coming face to face with life choices that I was unaware of until then. Sure, I knew my life had a lot of stress, but I was strong. Nothing could stand in my way, or so I thought. I kept pressing on, never expecting this engrained belief and this approach to life would affect my health in such a deep way.

Soon I could no longer ignore that my body was overcome with the intensity that had been going on for years. It had been sending me warning signs, but I was so disconnected I didn't notice until, finally, the signals became drastic enough that I had to stop and pay attention.

When I walked out of the hospital on the day of my scheduled surgery, I not only made the choice to forego surgery, I also made the choice to listen to my body. That wasn't an easy time. I mustered the courage to face reality, beyond the story and the posturing and the person I unconsciously thought I had to be. I had to meet my whole self: mind, body, spirit and energy.

Looking back, it was completely worth it—not only for the vitality and happiness I now enjoy, but also because I learned so much that I could then share with others. I've helped thousands upon thousands of people because of this life-altering experience.

Now, I tell my patients with conviction, “Take full ownership of your journey to wellness, and align with right-feeling choices. Have the courage to take an honest look at whether you are activating or restricting the healing power that comes through you. Become curious to know what it feels like to have a calm body, a clear mind and an energized being.”

Those who learn to do so will never again feel like a victim of their family genetics or a hopeless failure who can never get their test numbers right. Those who learn these simple techniques can connect to their body as their friend and wellness partner. They navigate through life’s challenges with joy as their companion. Hard times are simply a pause for more reflection and more awareness, and no one waits for better days because every day has its own gifts.

To the Reader:

The first step toward full health is a shift in perspective. Whether this is your first look at this matter of wellness from within, or if you’re already on the path to self-governance of your health, this book opens a door for you to understand what I missed when I became gravely ill with cancer. You can support your own restore-and-renew system by learning to L.I.S.T.E.N. to your body. Click this link [\[LINK\]](#) to take your own health quiz.

You are on the cusp of a massive opportunity. In the following chapters, you will discover how you can access key information that could turn statistical odds to your favor. At the very least, you will get a glimpse of the powerful being you are.