

Navigating Complementary/Alternative Medicine

**OLLI at UNC Asheville
Fab Friday Lunch & Learn Lecture
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Outline of Today's Discussion:

Working/real world definitions to clarify the discussion

Very brief introductions to systems and modalities of healthcare

The importance of addressing all aspects of health
(physical, emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual)

How to access quality care

How to find qualified, well trained, ethical health professionals in different fields

The importance of having a healthcare team that works together for **you**.

Time for questions, answers
and discussion on real life examples of the issues discussed.

Definitions of Terms

Conventional Medicine: Methods of diagnosis, treatment and research taught at mainstream institutions such as allopathic medical schools.

Traditional Medicine: System of medicine and healing arts handed down over generations/millennia in a particular culture. Examples include Chinese Medicine, Ayurveda from India, Native American Medicine.
In USA allopathic medicine is our tradition as the mainstream system since about 1919.

Allopathic Medicine from the Latin opposite suffering. The dominant system in the USA since the implementation of the Flexner report in the 1910's. Diagnosis is based western scientific methods. Treatment is directed against the symptom or disease. E.g. Drugs as antibiotics, anti inflammatory alpha and beta and calcium channel blockers, cough supressants, reuptake inhibitors, and “The war on cancer”

Alternative Medicine (So labeled by allopathic medicine); Any therapy not commonly taught in a mainstream institution. I don't like this term due to its divisive either/or, us/them polarizing quality.

Complementary Medicine: That which is deemed acceptable by allopathic medicine to complement or go along with it. E.g. using acupuncture to mitigate against nausea caused by chemotherapy.

Integrative Medicine: Combining the use of various modalities of treatment including; allopathic, traditional and complementary therapies. However, usually with an allopathic anti-disease mindset.

Holistic Medicine: An approach to health care that addresses all of the factors relating to health and well being including the physical, emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual aspects of our being.

Embraces all effective and safe modalities of diagnosis and treatment to create optimal health, prevent and treat disease.

Bias is for health.

The Principles of Holistic Medical Practice

Fundamental Beliefs of the American Holistic Medical Association (AHMA)

Optimal Health is the primary goal of holistic medical practice. It is the conscious pursuit of the highest level of functioning and balance of the physical, environmental, mental, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of human experience, resulting in a dynamic state of being fully alive. This creates a condition of well-being regardless of the presence or absence of disease.

The Healing Power of Love. Holistic healthcare practitioners strive to meet the patient with grace, kindness, acceptance, and spirit without condition, as love is life's most powerful healer.

Whole Person. Holistic healthcare practitioners view people as the unity of body, mind, spirit and the systems in which they live.

Prevention and Treatment. Holistic healthcare practitioners promote health, prevent illness and help raise awareness of dis-ease in our lives rather than merely managing symptoms. A holistic approach relieves symptoms, modifies contributing factors, and enhances the patient's life system to optimize future well-being.

Innate Healing Power. All people have innate powers of healing in their bodies, minds and spirits. Holistic healthcare practitioners evoke and help patients utilize these powers to affect the healing process.

Integration of Healing Systems. Holistic healthcare practitioners embrace a lifetime of learning about all safe and effective options in diagnosis and treatment. These options come from a variety of traditions, and are selected in order to best meet the unique needs of the patient. The realm of choices may include lifestyle modification and complementary approaches as well as conventional drugs and surgery.

Relationship-Centered Care. The ideal practitioner-patient relationship is a partnership which encourages patient autonomy, and values the needs and insights of both parties. The quality of this relationship is an essential contributor to the healing process.

Individuality. Holistic healthcare practitioners focus patient care on the unique needs and nature of the person who has an illness rather than the illness that has the person.

Teaching by Example. Holistic healthcare practitioners continually work toward the personal incorporation of the principles of holistic health, which then profoundly influence the quality of the healing relationship.

Learning Opportunities. All life experiences, including birth, joy, suffering and the dying process, are profound learning opportunities for both patients and healthcare practitioners.



AHMA
AMERICAN HOLISTIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Very Brief Introductions:

Allopathic, Osteopathic, Naturopathic Medicine

Traditional Chinese Medicine / Ayurveda (science of life)

Somatic/body based therapies

Herbal and Nutritional Medicine

Energy Medicine - conventional diagnostic radiology (radiation therapy to LASER), homeopathy, healing touch, Reiki, Qi gong

Spiritual Healing



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The Importance of Addressing all Aspects of Health

SPIRITUAL

ENVIRONMENTAL

SOCIAL

MENTAL

EMOTIONAL

PHYSICAL

Tips on Accessing High Quality Care

Where do you start?

First what are your needs?

Specific problem, general care, need help exploring options or coordinating care?

How to know what is available in your community?

Professional websites of integrative medicine doctors

AHMA, ACCAM, ICIM, AAEM

Dentists IAOMT, HDA

Other professional websites

Local institutions

A Word on Licensing

Every state makes its own decisions on what professions are licensed
and

What the scope of practice for each profession is.

Several states have health freedom laws to protect non-licensed professions

Credentials and proper training are very important but not everything.

Who Do You Need on Your Health Team?

1 YOU Without you not much can happen

Can be any combination of players that are supporting your health.

Ideally they are willing to communicate with each other and work together with you and for you and to continuously improve their skills and services.

AZ Ctr for Health and Medicine and Harvard examples

Who to Invite on Your Team

Ask trustworthy friends especially those who have experienced such care.

Ask details about their experiences to see if their recommendations are right for you.

Ask Experienced professionals especially ones you already know.

Locally Asheville Natural Wellness

Collaborative care and care coordination

Careful asking folks who do not know the field. Caution is good to a point.

Just as with any profession check it out and check out who you are considering seeing. Not all baby sitters, or carpenters or ____

Are as competent or reliable as other _____

How to Evaluate a Quality Health Professional

(adapted from American Holistic Medical Association website)

When looking for a healthcare provider who will offer knowledge and understanding of complementary and integrative modalities, here are some thoughts to keep in mind:

The provider should be trained in holistic medicine./ well trained in their field

When selecting a physician or practitioner, keep in mind the method of referral. Was it professional or personal and do you know someone who has seen this healthcare provider?

Just as other professionals are recommended by people, make sure you **trust** the person or business from whom you've received the suggestion, and do your homework. **Research** the organization - their technical certifications, professional organizations or hospital affiliations.

Your Visit Addresses You as a Whole Person not just the symptoms that brought you in.

Make sure you feel the visit was adequate. Holistically-minded doctors tend to ask patients about diet, exercise, and other lifestyle habits, including stress level, emotional well-being, and even spiritual beliefs and practices.

You experience an open and honest appointment.

For many, a visit to the doctor often causes anxiety and worry. It's important that your healthcare provider not only put you at ease, but be open to discussing your concerns and your options.

You should feel comfortable enough to inform and educate yourself on other options and opinions, and the doctor or practitioner should be respectful and helpful regarding outside research.

Drugs or procedures are not the only solutions they offer.

Treatments are most effective when tailored to your unique needs and preferences. You are not a widget to be put on an assembly line protocol.

The focus should be on what is best for your health.

You would refer them to a family member or friend.

Patients should have a good level of confidence, personal comfort, and trust in their physician and practitioner.

“Would I recommend this person to a family member and close friend?”

A Local Example

Asheville Natural Wellness, LLC

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Highly Credentialed Professionals providing Holistic and Integrative Healthcare listed on Asheville Natural Wellness are selected on their commitment to high standards of Conduct, Integrity, and Ethics.

Each practitioner has read, agreed to, and has signed our Code of Ethics.

The CODE ensures patient/client care is of the highest standards.

CODE OF ETHICS

Purpose

The purpose of the following Code of Ethics is to ensure that all Asheville Natural Wellness members adhere to high quality professional standards at all times. This protects clients and helps ensure high quality care...

Scope of Practice

Asheville Natural Wellness practitioners must practice within their respective scope of practice and follow all local, state and federal laws governing their profession.

Collaborative Care

Asheville Natural Wellness practitioners must know the limits of their professional competence and not step beyond these boundaries.

Appropriate referrals to qualified health care practitioners should be made when necessary.

Respectful Care

Asheville Natural Wellness practitioners maintain the highest level of professionalism in the care they provide.

We treat our clients and colleagues with respect, courtesy, care and consideration.

Asheville Natural Wellness practitioners practice ethically at all times and respect the needs of their clients.

Education Disclosure

All information requested about a practitioner's educational background must be provided at the request of a client.

Confidentiality

Client confidentiality is protected at all times and records are kept in a secure place in accordance with HIPPA regulations.

All documents pertaining to each client must be made available to the client upon request, as required by law and professional standards.

Continuing Education

Practitioners continually enhance their professional skills by attending continuing education courses in order to better serve their clients.

We keep our skills up-to-date on the state of the art and the science of practice to be maximally effective for our clients.

Professional Responsibility

Practitioners representing Asheville Natural Wellness present themselves in a professional manner by exercising good judgment, practicing with integrity and adhering to the above Code of Ethics and Scope of Practice. They encourage ethical behavior and consult with licensing/credentialing board members to resolve any issues that may arise regarding their practices.

The Importance of Having a Well Trained Coordinator of Your Health Team

Like a good primary care doctor.

Ideally someone who has a broad understanding of health

Knows the local resources

Communicates well with others

Can help you navigate next steps or directly coordinated care.

A Word on Nutritional Supplements

Quality of supplements and herbs

Not all are created equal

Not all are equal to their hype

Not all are as evil as the so called “quack busters” say

Doses, absorption, timing, mixing, contra-indications

Important to have advice on this things from an experienced professional. (“Honest Herbal” anecdote)

A Word on Compounding Pharmacy

Special medications in special forms for special needs

Capsules, creams/topicals, troches, injections
Medications, special doses, hormones, pain medications,

Several good ones in the area. 2 in Asheville

Asheville Compounding Pharmacy on Merrimon

&

Nature's Pharmacy on Biltmore Ave.

A Word On Insurance Coverage

Depends on your plan and what state you live in.

Read the fine print so you can make an informed decision about what works best for you.

Medicare. Some things are covered including some specialty lab tests.

Arizona Center for Health and Medicine Experience

The Moral of the Story

As you can see there is much more to holistic health than conventional, alternative and complementary treatments.

It is a way of looking at the world, as well as practicing the best quality medicine we are able to in the moment.

Ideally holistic health is what we are all looking for and what healthcare practitioners are practicing.

And Remember the #1 Player on your Team is YOU 😊

Mark L. Hoch, M.D.

Is Board Certified in Family Medicine and a Founding Diplomate of the American Board of Integrative/Holistic Medicine.

He is Adjunct Assistant Professor of Family Medicine and Community Health at The University of Minnesota School of Medicine and Community Faculty at the Center for Spirituality and Healing at the Academic Health Center.

Dr. Hoch is a life member of the American Holistic Medical Association since 1986, and was President in 2002-3 and a 9 year board member.

He was also the lead physician at the Arizona Center for Health and Medicine, a multidisciplinary holistic center in Phoenix.

He has training and practice experience in osteopathy, nutritional medicine, Trager, mind-body approaches, Qi Gong and spiritual healing.

Dr. Hoch is happy to now be in service in Asheville at Family to Family.