



Solve Your HEALTH Puzzle

A Guide to *Better Health*
Through Naturopathic Medicine

DR. KIVETTE PARKES

Solve Your Health Puzzle

**A Guide to Better Health Through
Naturopathic Medicine**

By Dr. Kivette Parkes

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Dedication

To my grandmother, Edna Lovina Simmonds, the absolute love of my life. You may be gone but you live on in my heart. I hope you are proud of me for helping other grandmothers stick around longer to watch their granddaughters grow up.

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My private practice is at The Lifestyle Clinic in Charlotte, NC www.lifestyle-clinic.com. We see people in person from all over the Carolinas and we have long-distance patients via phone or video from all across the U.S. and internationally. I am also the creator of www.notjustweight.com, an exclusive online clinic dedicated to helping people on the journey to sustained health and wellness supported by dedicated Naturopathic Lifestyle coaches.

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Introduction

Hello! I am so excited that you decided to read this book. My name is Dr. Kivette Parkes and I am a board-certified, licensed Naturopathic Doctor. I also have a master's degree in Human Nutrition and I have made it my life's work to educate and empower people just like you to live healthier, more fulfilling lives.

I am often asked why I decided to do Naturopathic Medicine as opposed to having a regular medical career. The simple answer is that I believe I was born to do this. My journey to this kind of medicine was tumultuous, to say the least. I decided to take the path less often traveled by dedicating my life to alternative and natural medicine as opposed to pursuing a career in conventional medicine using drugs and surgery.

It wasn't an easy or even obvious career path for me considering that up until my junior year in college I had never even heard of Naturopathic Medicine. I had no idea what it was, and I certainly didn't go out looking for it. I kinda just stumbled upon it. I was all set to go the traditional medical route, but, there was a small issue — I dreaded hospitals. I had no idea how it would be possible for me to go to medical school and never set foot in a hospital. I just knew at my core that I wouldn't be able to

be around critically ill and possibly dying patients all the time. It just never resonated with my spirit. It takes a special kind of person to thrive in that environment and I knew that wasn't me.

I care deeply about other people's pain. In fact, I feel it. When they hurt, I hurt. When they cry, I cry. I knew that being around sickness and disease would really cause me pain. I couldn't imagine spending the rest of my life like that. But, I still wanted to be a doctor and help people, so I was conflicted.

When I was thirteen years old, I experienced the death of someone close to me for the very first time. My grandmother, who was the absolute love of my life, went to a hospital and never came back home. We never even had a chance to say goodbye. I never got a last hug or kiss. That loss left me hurt and paralyzed and I unconsciously associated hospitals with death. Later on, I realized that she'd had heart disease and hypertension which eventually led to kidney failure.

As a child, I didn't understand any of that. I just knew she was gone and there was nothing I could do about it. She was my entire world and something that I now realize is that a largely preventable disease took her away from me way too soon. That experience changed me forever; I really disliked sickness and disease. Obviously, that was not a good thing for a prospective medical student. I secretly imagined having a practice where all my patients were healthy or on the road to becoming the healthiest version of themselves. A practice where I didn't treat or manage diseases but instead helped my patients to truly get better. A medical practice where I facilitated healing and health. I had no idea how this would even be possible

because up to that point, I had never seen a medical practice like that. But, I kept dreaming.

As I got closer and closer to applying to medical school, I became more disheartened at what I observed in conventional medical practice. At that time, I also had my own health challenges that didn't seem to get better despite all the drugs I was prescribed. I had what was called 'recurrent strep throat' that would pop up unannounced every few weeks. Even though my strep test was always negative, I was prescribed an endless stream of antibiotics and steroids because I was generally severely and acutely ill with all the symptoms that would go along with a bad infection. I had a fever, swollen lymph nodes, a red painful rash inside my throat, body aches, joint pain, and severe fatigue. I always felt really sick and I would feel even worse after the medications.

One day, I decided to take matters into my own hands and get my body healthier because it was clear that something was very wrong. I had also gained about 50 pounds thanks to the endless buffet of fine college dining and I felt terrible all the time. I became very conscious of my body and the fact that none of my clothes fit and, honestly, I just got tired of feeling bad. This is when I first became fascinated by nutrition. In my quest to get myself healthier and to lose the extra weight, I stumbled upon the most amazing field of medicine I had ever come across — *Naturopathic Medicine*.

It was instant love. You know the kind of love that has your heart racing? The kind of passion that keeps you up at night? It was that kind of love. I felt like I found my purpose. My soulmate. I found myself. Why didn't anyone ever tell me that this type of medicine existed? How did I not know

that there were Naturopathic medical schools that offered a four-year post-graduate degree, training doctors in the art and science of nutrition and natural medicine?

I decided to study Naturopathic Medicine and, instantly, felt like all my dreams had come true. I ditched my plans to go to medical school because I couldn't see myself prescribing drugs to people that I wasn't willing to take myself. With Naturopathic Medicine, my dream of being able to practice medicine while never having to work in a hospital was finally a realistic goal. My dream of having a practice filled with patients who were actually healthy and working on maintaining or improving their health was finally possible. This dynamic way of practicing medicine — in a way that focuses on health and wellness instead of disease and sickness — became my passion, and my health journey became the trip that would last a lifetime.

Through using the principles of Naturopathic Medicine, I finally experienced what it really meant to feel good. In fact, I felt better than good. I felt *fantastic*. I was finally able to get to the root cause of why I felt sick all the time. What was misdiagnosed and therefore wrongly treated as 'recurrent strep throat' turned out to be food sensitivities. Changing my diet and minimizing my exposure to the foods I was sensitive to eliminated my episodes of sickness.

The pleasant side effects of my new lifestyle changes included improved mood, energy, and overall sense of well-being. I was also able to fit back into jeans I hadn't worn for years. I finally felt whole. I felt like *me*.

It's hard for me to describe what it feels like to be sick and helpless to someone who has never been sick. When you

finally get the answer as to why your body has been feeling the way it feels, a whole new world of possibilities opens up. The pieces of the puzzle come together. You start to piece-by-piece create your own picture of hope because you feel empowered.

That is what happened to me when I went from being sick to feeling indescribably well. That hope is what I try to inspire in others and why I chose – and choose – to be a Naturopathic Doctor.

Over the years, conventional medical practitioners have focused on orthodox drug-based medicine as the panacea for all diseases. Sadly, our reality is that people are sicker and more drugged than ever before. What can be done? Is there any way out of this deadlock?

This educational piece is written with the objective of introducing Naturopathic Medicine as an alternative that can be effectively leveraged to unravel the underlying causes of many different diseases and common health problems. My hope is that it will serve as a window to an alternative path. By the time you are done digesting the contents of this book, you will understand why Naturopathic Medicine should be the obvious choice for anyone interested in truly getting well, preventing disease, and living a healthier and more fulfilling life.

This book is a quick, easy and, hopefully, fun read.

To simplify the reading, it is divided into three sections:

Section 1:

General Overview of the Conventional Health Care Business

Section 2:

The Naturopathic-Medicine Model

Section 3:

What's In It for You?

Section 4:

Patient Stories

It's time to learn about how Naturopathic Medicine can improve your health and that of your loved ones. I know you are eager to get started. Stop waiting. Turn the page or scroll to the next one!

Section One

General Overview of the Conventional Health Care Business

Americans are sick

(I know, not the upbeat opening you were expecting but read on.)

I acknowledge that my statement above is a blanket statement that isn't 100% true. There are many healthy Americans who feel amazing and live without the use of drugs and surgery. Having said that, I still believe that the overwhelming majority of people living in the United States today have some sort of chronic health issue that they contend with. To accompany that, a large number of people routinely undergo surgery and take daily medications because of those issues.

Think about it. Do you or anyone you know routinely take prescription or over-the-counter drugs? I would venture to say that statistically speaking, we are sicker than citizens of most other developed nations around the world.

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We are also drugged. It is alarming that around two-thirds of the population at any given point in time are taking prescription medications. This, unfortunately, includes our children. It makes me sad just to think about it. We are sick and drugged and getting sicker. That's the fact. Just think about it. Are you or anyone you know taking a medication prescribed for some chronic condition? The answer is most likely *yes*. Do you or anyone you know have a chronic issue like high blood pressure, diabetes, or pain? Again, the answer is most likely *yes*. Are you or anyone you know overweight or obese? Let me take a wild guess — probably.

I am not making this up; all you have to do is pay attention. Look around you at school, work, the grocery store. Look at your family members. Look in the mirror. Look at our children. I am a master at avoiding anything that makes me uncomfortable, so I don't like to think about it. I don't like the reality of our healthcare system. My friends tell me I live in a bubble because I avoid the news at all costs (because it is usually *bad* news — and it makes me sad).

At any given point in time, I have no idea what's going on in the world — especially politically and socially. The reality is, things are usually pretty bad, somewhere. I like my bubble and I hate it when I have to face the reality that the world we live in is quite messy.

What I haven't been able to avoid, however, is the reality that people are sick. They walk into my office asking for help every day. I can't avoid it. I notice the tired look on faces of people I don't know when I am sitting in an airport or riding a train. I see what people put into their shopping carts at the supermarket. I pass the cars wrapped around

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the drive-thru lanes in the mornings on my way to work. I see the little girls with eczema and asthma. I see little boys with ADHD. I see women with diabetes. I see men with hypertension. Even if I wanted to, I couldn't shield myself from this within my bubble even if I tried.

I have one particular patient that is always telling me that she would be healthier if she lived in a bubble. While I am tempted to agree, I am reminded that bubbles are transparent and we can't realistically exist in them. We are always going to be impacted by things and people around us. It is my firm belief that everything affects everything else whether or not we acknowledge it.

Here is the reality check

According to Bloomberg, between 2014 and 2015 Americans spent over \$25 billion on drugs, a 14% increase over the previous year. In total, U.S. citizens spent over \$425 billion on drugs within a decade (2005–2015). This is a huge sum of money by any standard. Additionally, the statistics show a progressive increase that may cost the country between \$610 and \$640 billion by the year 2020 according to IMS Institute for Healthcare informatics. What could be responsible for the huge amount of money spent on prescription drugs? It is an indisputable fact that those drugs were used by people with medical issues, and not some space aliens.

The *Health Day News* made the startling comment in their May 14, 2014 edition that "prescription drugs are playing an increasingly large role in our lives, with nearly half of all Americans taking one or more medications." This cannot be dismissed as falsehood if you consider the number of

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adults that use and literally live on some prescription drugs for treating high cholesterol, obesity, cancer, arthritis, and cardiovascular diseases. Apart from the elderly with these health challenges, an increasing number of young people are plagued by one chronic health complaint or another — such as depression, pain, fatigue, anxiety, IBS, migraines, or other debilitating condition (or conditions).

This information should not be disturbing according to William Lang, Vice President of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Lang stated: "This is really not earth-shattering news. There is an increasing number of people with chronic illnesses, and the primary management tool available for dealing with chronic illness is medication."

To stay alive, people have to support their lives with drugs. It is the bitter truth. It is sad. And while Mr. Lang is not alarmed (why would he be? This is how he makes a living), I most certainly am. Despite all the money spent on drugs, we only get sicker and stay sick longer.

The leading causes of death according to the Centers for Disease Control are heart disease, cancer, and chronic lower-respiratory diseases. That's the reality. The huge amount of money spent on the conventional medical care to reverse the impact of these illnesses has not provided the needed relief for people because the solutions that are currently available have not been effective enough to prevent death arising from illnesses. That's pretty sad.

According to research by Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease, about 50% of American adults are living with one or more chronic diseases. The Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention gives the breakdown of chronic disease in the U.S. as follows:

- About half of American adults, a total of 117 million Americans, have at least one chronic health condition. Twenty-five percent of adults had two or more chronic diseases in 2012.
- Out of the 10 top killer diseases in the U.S. in 2010, 7 were chronic diseases – with cancer and heart disease alone accounting for about 48% of the mortality.
- Arthritis alone is responsible for making over 53 million adults become victims of disability.
- Kidney failure, blindness among adults, and lower-limb amputation (not accident-related) are all frequently caused by diabetes and on the rise.

It can easily be concluded that the way we are doing things currently is not working. Ask any PCP (primary care physician) medical doctor. They will quickly tell you that the vast majority of people walking into their office have issues related to high blood pressure, various digestive disorders, pain, of some sort or diabetes. They will also tell you that they prescribe the same medications to the same patients for years on end with little or no improvement in their overall chronic condition.

What's missing?

What is really missing is a solution that can't be found at the bottom of a prescription bottle. Most chronic conditions have their root cause in a person's lifestyle

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choices. This includes things like diet, exercise (I know, I know — everyone knows this, blah, blah, blah), sleep habits, stress management, and social habits like alcohol consumption and smoking. I might also add to the list drug intake, both prescription and illegal.

The solution appears so simple that it is often overlooked. I must admit that I even question the effectiveness of lifestyle changes sometimes. It's almost ridiculous when I get someone in my office with a fasting blood sugar level in the 300s range while having taken diabetes medication for over 10 years and then, 90 days later, they have a level below 100 — with no diabetes medication! Seriously, 10 years of drug therapy couldn't do what 90 days of lifestyle changes have done.

Sometimes I second-guess myself. I say things like, *Maybe they were misdiagnosed. They were probably never really diabetic to begin with.* It's just really hard for me to wrap my head around the fact that someone has remained sick and drugged for so long when the solution to their issue was so simple and cheap! Then I get smacked back to reality. That's it!

That's always it. Being healthy is cheap. Nobody profits except for the healthy person and their loved ones. It's a horrible business model. Can you imagine what 10 years' worth of diabetes medications and doctor visits costs? Add that to the variable long-term effects of diabetes, specialist doctor visits, and other medications that will be needed to treat the side effects of the medications and the long-term effects of the disease. Can you imagine the amount of money involved over 20 years? How about 30 years? That is a brilliant business model. I admire it. I actually like it. It

is indisputably genius. It creates lifelong customers who have no hope of breaking free because they never get better. There is no cure. Drugs are their only option.

Except none of that is true. At least, not for most people.

Show me the money

The United States has one of the most advanced medical systems in the world. The health sector can boast sophisticated and efficient medical equipment along with state-of-the-art health facilities that are manned by well-trained professionals. Every year, billions of dollars are invested in the health sector to guarantee the citizens have access to quality healthcare.

In a report published by the Commonwealth Fund on October 8, 2015, the amount spent in 2013 by the U.S. government annually exceeded that of 12 other high-income countries combined. The report revealed that the government spent an average of \$9,086 per citizen annually. By July 2016, that figure had risen to \$10,345 per person. If you multiply that figure by the over 300 million residents of the country, you will have an idea of the huge sum of money spent on health.

To spare you the stress of doing that calculation, out of the \$980 billion budgeted for the 2015 fiscal year, almost \$260 billion was spent on healthcare. This is proof of the commitment the government has in providing good healthcare for its citizens. However, collectively, we are still very sick. The high mortality rate along with the skyrocketing level of chronic diseases is not reflective of the financial investment (if that is what we are going to measure our efforts by).

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Consider the Swiss. While the Swiss government spends relatively less on healthcare per person, the Swiss still enjoy better health than their American counterparts. For instance, while the U.S. spent an average of \$9,086 on the health of each citizen, Switzerland spent \$6,325 per person, making the country the second-highest spender on healthcare. If you consider these figures, the Swiss government spent about 70% of the annual spending of the U.S. government on health. However, the Swiss government gets more value for her money than the U.S. government.

For instance, with a life expectancy of 78.8 years, Americans live for fewer years than the Swiss — who live on average 4 years longer than Americans, with their life expectancy of 82.9 years — without spending as much on health. These figures point to a sad reality: the state of health of people does not really depend on the amount spent on it.

Why should Americans spend more on health than people in other countries and yet still struggle with preventable health challenges? The problem lies with the system. The system has a major flaw that inevitably stunts progress — the patient is usually taken out of the equation. While drug companies are busy making drugs and promoting them (I still can't get over the drug ads on TV. I know it's fairly normal now, but only if you never leave the United States as this is literally *never* done in other countries. But, I digress...), the patients and their lifestyles are completely ignored.

Dr. Joseph Mercola, a natural health expert once said: "Thirty cents out of every dollar spent on medical care in

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America is wasted, which amounts to billions annually. This amount of waste is made up of inefficient delivery of care and excessive administrative costs, unnecessary, inflated prices, prevention failures, and outright fraud.”

These problems, coupled with the fact that patients and their lifestyles are not considered as one of the most important factors for disease elimination, result in what we have today – a mess.

Let’s keep it real. The current healthcare model doesn’t work very well. It is a complicated system of diagnosis and procedure codes dictated by insurance companies. This complex web leaves health care providers powerless to make decisions based on the needs of the patient that don’t fall within the coding guidelines. In short, healthcare providers can only do what the insurance companies will pay for. I don’t know about you, but that is the single most ridiculous thing I have ever heard. Time after time, I hear patients say, *“I have to get a procedure but I need to call my insurance company to see if it is covered.”* Or, *“My doctor had to put me on a different drug because my insurance company no longer covers the one I was prescribed.”*

Really? How is that even okay??

We have a problem

The real problem is, we have become conditioned to think our current state of affairs is normal. A person seeking mental health services can be told by their insurance company that they can’t see a particular provider because they are ‘out of network’ and therefore not covered. That is ludicrous. What if that is the most appropriate provider

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for that particular case? How is that at all helpful to the person seeking help?

At the time of this writing, I have a patient who needs an MRI. It is not an emergency, but it is definitely needed to rule out or confirm a possible issue she may be having. Her insurance required that she see her primary care doctor — who then prescribed medication instead of the MRI. This medication caused no improvement in her symptoms. She returned to her primary care doctor who referred her to a Neurologist. This is only because her insurance company requires a referral from a primary care doctor if someone needs to see a Neurologist. In fact, a lot of Neurology practices only take referrals from primary care practices because insurance won't pay otherwise.

At this point, I thought for sure she would get the MRI. This is what Neurologists do; they take a look at the brain if someone is having very obvious neurological issues. I was wrong. The Neurologist referred her to a physical therapist. Apparently, her insurance dictates that other interventions must be attempted before they will pay for an MRI. She was therefore required to do several sessions of physical therapy before an MRI would be approved. Three months later, and she still has not received an MRI. This practice of wasting time and referring a patient from specialist to specialist is not only ridiculous, it is dangerous.

I saw another patient who is severely allergic to the generic version of a particular drug but still takes it because the insurance company won't cover the 'name-brand' version of the drug.

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I met someone else as well (these types of testimonials are endless and could fill an entire book in and of themselves!) who told me her insurance would only cover 5 sessions of nutrition counseling even though she was fatigued and about 70 pounds overweight and desperately seeking nutritional help.

Make no mistake, conventional medical practice is a business. Medical doctors, surgeons, pharmacists, drug reps, and most conventional medical professionals have a reputation as being high-income earners. For the most part, this is true.

Regard this anecdote: I went back to my high school years after graduating and visited one of my favorite teachers, who said to me with a look of bewilderment and outright disappointment: "You are brilliant. I don't understand why you wouldn't go to regular medical school and make some real money?" After I picked up my ego off the floor and carefully dusted it off, I quietly responded: "This is the only thing that makes sense to me and I genuinely enjoy helping people get healthier."

Unfortunately, my teacher is right in that money is a major player and major consideration in healthcare. I may venture to say that money is the *primary focus* of health care.

No modern medical practice in this present system can function without staff for billing and coding. Billing and coding are probably the most important part of any conventional medical practice. I am not kidding. It is not the doctor. It's not the Pharmacist. It's not the Nurses,

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Nurse Practitioners, or Physician Assistants. *It's the billing and coding personnel.*

Think about it. Seriously, I want you to stop right now and just reflect on what happens when you walk into a regular medical establishment. You are greeted by a receptionist who generally asks you to sign in and almost immediately asks you for your insurance card unless they already have it on file. Actually, they ask about your insurance when you call to make the appointment.

We are conditioned to think this is normal. Before you even see a provider, there needs to be proof of reimbursement. Nobody asks you how you are doing. They ignore the fact that you are in pain or having some other type of discomfort — the money comes first. Right up front. Show me the money! If you don't have insurance or a means to pay out of pocket, you can forget about getting any kind of conventional care outside of an emergency room or a free community clinic.

Obviously, every business needs to be profitable. I am not saying money isn't necessary. I am simply pointing out that in this particular model, money is the driving force. As a consumer and a customer of this system, it is important that you are aware of this fact because it is the invisible force that ultimately dictates your care and therefore your health. Don't get me wrong, as the owner of a cash-based wellness practice, I am acutely aware of the role of money in business. Without money, there is no business. However, the difference is in what you are paying for. Is it health? Or is it disease?

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My point is, the current conventional medical business model is focused on diagnosis and reimbursement. In other words, disease and money. There is no money without disease. Therefore, maintaining your disease and hence the cashflow is the highest priority in that model. Reimbursement is only given according to diagnosis and procedure codes. Your provider absolutely has to give you a diagnosis in order to get reimbursed, so there is no room for you in this system to be well or get better (outside of things that are coded as preventative like annual physicals and well-visits).

I repeatedly have people tell me that they do not want me to include certain things in their health record because, once they have a certain diagnosis, it will stick with them for life and affect their insurance premiums. My first instinct is to laugh and say that they are going to get better and this isn't a lifelong condition. However, the truth is that once you get diagnosed with a chronic disease in this model, you generally keep that diagnosis for life because you truly never get better.

I had a friend who ran a very successful Anesthesiology (pain) clinic. At the end of each day, he would pre-fill his prescription pad for all the patients scheduled to come in the next day. I asked him how he knew the people coming in wouldn't be better and therefore not need the drugs anymore. His answer was sobering: "These people will never get better. They will be on these medications until they die."

This was early in my career and that was a defining moment of clarity for me. I knew without a shadow of a doubt that Naturopathic Medicine was the only way I

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could practice, thrive, and most importantly, help people get well. The model of maintaining disease is literally sick. I therefore urge you to look at your health objectively and decide what you want to pay for (let's face it, we are all paying for something). Is it going to be health or disease maintenance?

Hopefully by now you get the picture. It's a sad, ugly, unsettling picture but it's not really new information. On some level, most of us know these things. Getting out of the bubble and facing reality is what I am helping you do right now.

So, now what?

Time for more reality. Are you ready? You need to be ready. I will apologize ahead of time if you are emotionally sensitive. Just know that this is all done in love. Those of you who are my patients know exactly where this is going. This train is headed outside your comfort zone!

With the exception of health problems pertaining to trauma caused by accidents, injuries physical or emotional, and certain congenital, metabolic, or genetic abnormalities (things you are born with), and certain infections and otherwise unexplained sudden illness — your current state of health is a result of your lifestyle.

I know, it sucks. I don't like saying it as much as you don't like hearing it. There are exceptions and, obviously, nothing I say is absolute. However, I work with people every day who reverse chronic conditions by changing their lifestyle. It's hard for me to ignore. It's like the time I had to come to grips with the fact that the reason I couldn't button my pants was because I was repeatedly

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eating French fries for dinner (don't judge me — French fries are delicious). Having to take personal responsibility for your health is not easy but if you plan to get better, it is the first step.

I tell people all the time that they have high blood pressure because they are in a stressful job or because they have an unhealthy marriage. It's not fun for anyone to admit these things. They are not things that usually can change overnight, but, it is necessary for me to say them because that is the truth. The truth is messy and not usually pleasant. If you are ever going to take responsibility for your health, this is where it starts. Take a really honest look at your history and your lifestyle and see if you can figure out why you are facing any of the challenges you are experiencing.

Health can be a real puzzle

The solution to the puzzle isn't always obvious. For example, when I was experiencing 'recurring strep-throat' episodes in my teens and early twenties, I had no clue that it was due to something I was eating. That is the case for many people. If you eat cookies and candy all day and your blood sugars are high, the solution is clear. Just reduce your intake of those foods and your blood sugars should improve. However, if you don't eat cookies and candy or anything remotely sweet and your blood sugars are still high, the solution isn't so obvious.

If you are overweight and you think it's a good idea to eat your meals from a drive-thru window (worst idea ever — trust me), the solution is again obvious. However, if you never eat fast food, live a mostly vegetarian lifestyle, and

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run five miles every morning and still have a weight issue, the puzzle gets a little more complicated. I had a patient who suffered from chronic migraines for almost 20 years, for instance, who had no clue that they were being caused by her birth control pills! Another patient was treated for chronic pain for years before discovering that the source was an infection that she was never tested or treated for.

Whether the solution to your health puzzle is as simple as identifying the role you play or taking the time to investigate your history and uncover the real cause of your issues, just understanding that you hold the key gives you power. It gives you hope. Now, we are all human and while knowledge is power, applying that knowledge consistently to improve and maintain good health is often a challenge. That is where I come in. I get it. I live in the same world you do, and I am the ultimate resister of change. I simply don't like change. I like what I like, I like my routine, it's safe and predictable. I am stubborn. However, I have come to appreciate the value that being healthy and feeling good physically, emotionally, and spiritually brings to overall life experience and that is enough to motivate me to help you.

Health is absolutely a journey. You never arrive at your destination. It's an ongoing lifestyle and an endless pursuit. As far as I see it, you only have two options: to be healthy or to be unhealthy. I personally recommend being as healthy as you can possibly be. It is pretty rewarding.

I get stories all the time from patients who had pretty much given up hope of living healthy active lives who now do things they never imagined. One lady, Sandra, ran a half marathon at the age of 67 after being told that her arthritis

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would eventually land her in a wheelchair. Greg, a 45-year-old man, decided to go on a mission trip to Uganda with his church group after getting his kidney function back to normal and didn't need frequent visits with his urologist anymore.

These are examples of the intangible quality of life factors that come from improving your health. It's not 'woo-woo,' crazy, out-of-this-world stuff. It's being able to use the toilet without assistance when you are 80 years old because your back doesn't hurt and your legs are strong. It's the ability to carry your grandchild up the stairs or give her a piggy-back ride. It is going on vacation and being able to participate fully in all the excursions because you have no mobility restrictions. It's getting up early to make breakfast and surprise your spouse because you have the energy to do so. It is being able to sleep at night and wake up rested in the morning. It is not being constipated or doubled over in pain every time you go to the bathroom. It's finally fitting into those jeans.

It is the little things. It is the big things. Health is everything.

Pay now or pay later

"Pay now or pay later" is a phrase I repeat all the time. Life follows the laws of physics. The laws are non-negotiable. They are absolute. Pay now or pay later is one of those laws (according to me).

PAY NOW means you will need to devote time, energy, intention, and money to making sure you are healthy now and reduce your risk factors for disease in the future. It means investing in high-quality natural foods. It means taking time to exercise. It means using more natural

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therapies to deal with occasional health issues instead of drugs. It means taking time to rest. It means stepping away from stressful people and situations. It means grocery shopping and cooking instead of eating out. It means having quiet time. It means saying no to some family and friends. It means putting yourself first.

PAY LATER means not doing most of the things above and hoping for the best. You run the risk of spending time in hospital beds, spending money on drugs, and possibly losing time from work and the people you love. You may get lucky and never have anything go wrong and live to be a hundred years old with all your mental faculties intact, without making any effort whatsoever. But, I am not much of a gambler (I once got really upset because I lost five dollars in a slot machine. I was furious!). While there are absolutely no guarantees in life, I am a fan of stacking the odds in my favor and I suggest you do the same. You are worth the investment now. You are worth your own time. You are worth your own money. You are worth your best effort. You deserve it.

If you are interested in getting out of the medical merry-go-round and taking steps to improve your health, Naturopathic Medicine is an obvious option.

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The Naturopathic Medicine Model

“Does anybody know what Naturopathic Medicine is?”

I usually ask that question when I give a talk, teach a class, or present at a seminar. Most people don't know what it is and, honestly, neither did I before I decided to pursue it as a career.

A Naturopathic Doctor in the United States uses the designation of ND (Naturopathic Doctor) or NMD (Naturopathic Medical Doctor) based on the particular degree earned. Naturopathic medical school is a four-year graduate program combined with clinical rotations in a clinical setting.

Instead of focusing on the disease model like traditional Western medicine, Naturopathic Medicine is focused on health. This is apparent in the Naturopathic approach to healing. In the regular disease-based system, one person may have a Gynecologist that focuses on disease of the reproductive tract. That same person may have a Cardiologist that focuses on diseases of the heart and

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circulatory system. They may also have a Psychiatrist that focuses on mental-emotional disorders, and a Gastroenterologist that focuses on diseases of the digestive tract. That is a little crazy to me since this is just one person!

In Naturopathic Medicine, specializing in a particular organ system and disease process is virtually impossible. It makes no practical sense based on our philosophy that the body is a whole, single entity with each system affecting the next. We therefore always have a holistic (*wholistic*) approach instead of a specialized approach. Don't get me wrong, there is a place for specialization in medicine. However, I believe that this should only be reserved for extreme disease cases and not daily health and wellness.

For example, if someone has extreme psychological disturbances, they should see a Psychiatrist and put on a drug protocol to help deal with the symptoms. However, if someone gets a little sad because that's how life is sometimes (they lost a pet or a relationship), I don't believe this is a case for drug intervention unless their behavior or mood becomes extreme. If you break your leg, you will probably need an orthopedic surgeon, not a nephrologist, and definitely not a naturopathic doctor.

Naturopathic Medicine is really old-school medicine. In its truest form, it is straight up back-to-basics old-fashioned healing without all the fancy bells and whistles. It digs deep down to the core of health issues and focuses on removing any impediments to health by supporting the body's natural ability to heal itself.

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Naturopathic Medicine pulls from a variety of ancient systems of health, including Indian (Ayurvedic), Chinese (Taoist), Greek (Hippocratic), Arabian, Egyptian, and European traditions. These time-tested health systems provide the philosophical and practical foundation for modern Naturopathic practice.

According to the American Association of Naturopathic Doctors:

Naturopathic doctors combine the wisdom of nature with the rigors of modern science. Steeped in traditional healing methods, principles, and practices, naturopathic medicine focuses on holistic, proactive prevention and comprehensive diagnosis and treatment. By using protocols that minimize the risk of harm, naturopathic doctors help facilitate the body's inherent ability to restore and maintain optimal health. It is the naturopathic doctor's role to identify and remove barriers to good health by helping to create a healing internal and external environment.

Naturopathic doctors (NDs) work in private practices, hospitals, clinics, and community health centers. NDs practice throughout the United States and Canada. Qualified naturopathic doctors undergo rigorous training before they become licensed health-care practitioners.

NDs treat all medical conditions and can provide both individual and family health care. Among the most common ailments they treat are allergies, chronic pain, digestive issues, hormonal imbalances, obesity, respiratory conditions, heart

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disease, fertility problems, menopause, adrenal fatigue, cancer, fibromyalgia, and chronic fatigue syndrome. NDs can perform minor surgeries, such as removing cysts or stitching up superficial wounds. However, they do not practice major surgery. NDs are trained to utilize prescription drugs, although the emphasis of naturopathic medicine is the use of natural healing agents.

Please pay attention

Naturopathic Medicine requires licensure and is covered by some insurance plans in some states but not others. In the states that do not require specific licensure, unlicensed alternative practitioners with no standardized training or formal education can utilize the term “Naturopath” — which is not the same as a licensed Naturopathic Doctor. As a consumer, it is important that you make this distinction when you are looking for a Naturopathic Doctor. There is a world of difference from an educational a philosophical standpoint and you absolutely need to make sure your health is in competent hands.

“So, what do you do again?”

That’s the question I get asked after I say I am a Naturopathic Doctor. Many people have heard of Homeopathy, Nutrition, Chiropractic, Acupuncture, or even Herbal Medicine. Naturopathic Medicine is a broad umbrella that encompasses various forms of non-invasive, non-toxic natural techniques or modalities to address the underlying cause of illness and chronic health challenges.

Naturopathic Medicine is based on very firm principles and the Naturopathic practice can include the use of various

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natural healing techniques. We are like handymen with a toolkit. In that toolkit, we can pull out various different tools to suit the case we are working on. It is truly the most fascinating system of health that I know, because it allows the provider to truly customize their approach.

For example, if you go to a Chiropractor, you will get some form of chiropractic adjustment because that is their training. If you go to an Acupuncturist, you will most likely get acupuncture because that is their specialty. A Massage Therapist will give you a massage. A Counselor will talk to you about your emotional health. A Homeopath will prescribe homeopathic remedies. Likewise, an Herbalist will prescribe herbs and a Nutritionist will prescribe a healthy diet. Some of these providers may take extra courses and add to their skillset. For example, some chiropractors may offer nutritional counseling, or a Homeopath may do some counseling. However, these providers are all highly specialized and are often the best people to go to if you are seeking those specialized services, and the additional areas they touch on are often only to enhance their core specialty.

A Naturopathic Doctor is like a primary-care doctor. I often describe what I do as holistic primary care. We don't specialize in any particular branch of Alternative Medicine. Our training is unique in that we are trained in a wide variety of alternative techniques. This gives us the flexibility to customize our approach based on what would be best for the person we are taking care of instead of treating everyone the same.

In the Naturopathic system of medicine, the patient is the most important person. Everything is tailored to their

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specific needs and no two patients are ever the same. We are trained extensively in clinical and laboratory diagnostic testing, nutritional medicine, lifestyle medicine, botanical medicine, Naturopathic physical medicine (including naturopathic manipulation therapy — similar to chiropractic), public health measures, hydrotherapy, counseling, minor surgery, homeopathy, Ayurveda, acupuncture, prescription medication, intravenous and injection therapy, and naturopathic obstetrics (natural childbirth).

Naturopathic Doctors are not created equal

While we have a vast and somewhat eclectic tool bag of skills,* most Naturopathic Doctors will focus on one or just a few areas in practice. I personally utilize mostly Nutritional Medicine (food), Botanical Medicine (herbs), Lifestyle Medicine, Clinical laboratory testing, and Counseling when working with my patients. Because of my training, however, I am able to recognize when someone would benefit more from other modalities such as Chiropractic, Acupuncture or even prescription medication, and I am able to make the appropriate referral to a more specialized provider.

**Fun Fact: Old-time Naturopathic Doctors were called Eclectics. Eclectic doctors utilized whatever approach was most beneficial for their patients!*

It is our philosophy that sets us apart

Naturopathic Doctors operate under the guidance of six fundamental principles of Naturopathic Medicine which are:

① THE HEALING POWER OF NATURE

The principle of the healing power of nature recognizes and respects the body's inherent ability to maintain, establish, and restore good health. If either the external or internal environment needed for recovery is inefficient or lacking, the doctor seeks to restore it. Therefore, the process is only supervised and guided by the doctor while nature takes its full course without any hindrances. The body isn't stupid. It is innately intelligent, and we rely on that intelligence to restore balance. Our only job is to support it.

② IDENTIFY AND TREAT THE CAUSE

People do not get sick without a cause. Something must trigger the illness. Because all the tests are negative doesn't mean it's 'in your head'. Because it can't be measured or quantified doesn't mean it isn't real. I firmly believe that you cannot truly get well unless the thing causing the illness is addressed. The Naturopathic approach doesn't treat symptoms. It is important that the causes of an illness are identified and completely removed to pave way for the recovery. To increase the effectiveness of this practice, there must be an understanding of the differences between cause of a disease and its symptoms.

The causes of an illness are the conditions that trigger the illness while the symptoms are the body's ways to attempt to heal itself of the illness. Symptoms are just the physical reactions of the body to a disease process and the attempt made by the body to personally heal itself from the effects of the disease or ailment. On the other hand, the causes of an illness may come from different sources: spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional.

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③ PREVENTION

An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. That old saying perfectly captures the essence of Naturopathic Medicine. Prevention is the primary focus of my practice. I frequently have days where I see only patients with absolutely no complaints. These people are well, and I absolutely love it. Just this week I was moved almost to the point of tears when one of my patients who started out extremely hypertensive (and medicated to the hilt) hit her 6-month mark with normal blood pressure readings and no drugs. This is something she was previously told would never be possible.

After addressing the initial areas of concern that direct them to Naturopathic care, many people achieve a level of wellness that they now strive to maintain and the only way to really do that is to proactively focus on prevention. Prevention isn't passive. It isn't screening, as regular medicine mistakenly labels it.

How is a colonoscopy or a mammogram preventative? If you find something on a screening, it means you already have it. It's not preventative. It is early detection which can prevent further progression. I am certainly a fan of screening, but it is absolutely not prevention.

Prevention is actively reducing your risk factors for major chronic diseases by having a lifestyle that supports that. Prevention is exercise, getting your teeth cleaned, meditating, saying no to dessert, not smoking, detoxing regularly, taking high-quality nutritional supplements, not getting in a drive-thru line. While nothing is ever absolute, making an effort to live well is certainly better than simply going annually to check if you have a disease yet because

that is how often your insurance (Dr. Blue Cross and Blue Shield... that's what I have) will pay for it!

④ THE DOCTOR AS TEACHER

The success of Naturopathic Medicine hinges on the ability of the doctor to play the dual role of a doctor and a teacher. My objective is to make sure my patients are educated. Whether in a private consultation or via an online education portal at *notjustweight.com*, I go above and beyond to provide people with practical information about their health. I find that an educated person is empowered to make lasting changes.

It also helps when you really understand why you are doing what you are doing. Gone are the days when a doctor just writes a prescription and the patient just mindlessly heads off to the pharmacy. People are now reading and researching interactions and side effects. We are an information-seeking society. Education is the only way to take charge of your health.

⑤ TREAT THE WHOLE PERSON

Whether the body is in good health or battling a serious disease, it is a function of the whole person. The health or lack of health is a result of the interaction of different complex factors in the body. Everything affects everything. It's that simple. Something happening in the digestive tract can cause symptoms in the legs. The body's systems are not isolated, independently-functioning parts. They all talk to each other. Every organ communicates to the rest of the body. The body is an interconnected web of systems that depend on each other to function. Therefore, it is impossible to treat one area of the body in isolation. We also can't separate the body from the mind. This is the

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core of Naturopathic Medicine and it specifically explains why Naturopathic Doctor can't ever specialize. It goes against our very philosophy. Mind, body, spirit. Those are the parts of a whole person.

⑥ FIRST DO NO HARM

This principle is sacred. Naturopathic Medicine employs non-toxic and non-invasive techniques. Side effects cause harm, therefore we try not to use any methods that will help one area of the body but hurt another. This is in stark contrast to regular medicine, where side effects are generally expected and accepted as normal. As far as I am concerned, there is no point in causing a disease to fix a disease or causing a symptom to fix a symptom.

I used to get killer headaches. Excedrin was my best friend. Nothing else would touch them. The only issue was, Excedrin made me extremely nauseated. So, I remember having to debate whether or not I wanted to have a headache or nausea. To be fair, some natural approaches may cause some unintended problems as well. For example, someone switching their diet to a higher proportion of plant-based foods may experience detox symptoms. Or, someone may be allergic to a particular food or herb. However, these issues are promptly recognized and another alternative or modifications can be made. The goal of Naturopathic Medicine is always to resolve problems without creating new ones.

How does Naturopathic treatment work?

Seeing a Naturopathic doctor is very different from seeing a regular medical doctor. Not all Naturopathic doctors are

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created equal. We are all very unique in our approach to patient care.

My style of practice is definitely not typical. I have a background in human nutrition, so my approach is generally to build my protocols on a foundation of good nutrition. I am also fond of the basics like exercise, stress reduction, and sleep. So my approach really builds on these fundamentals.

Whether you are receiving services through my private practice at The Lifestyle Clinic or online at www.notjustweight.com, the experience is generally the same. Your first session will last anywhere from 1–2 hours. That initial session is important because it gives you a chance to be heard. It is your body and you are the best person to explain what is going on with it. Details are important. I believe that I am good at my job because I listen. I often say that every patient sooner or later tells me exactly what is wrong with them if I listen close enough. For that reason, the first session is usually a lot longer than follow-up sessions which can range anywhere from thirty to sixty minutes.

While actual recommendations may of course vary per the individual, a typical plan from my office will usually include suggestions for nutrition, exercise, herbs/vitamins, and some mind-body practices. Follow-up sessions are initially scheduled anywhere from every two weeks to once a month. After sufficient progress has been made, follow-ups can generally be scheduled every three to six months.

Each session follows a format that encourages and facilitates feedback on your progress. The initial

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recommendations are often adjusted during these sessions based on your feedback. The overall goal is to resolve your symptoms by addressing the underlying cause. Once the initial concerns are addressed, you are ready for maintenance.

Maintenance involves a series of preventative strategies aimed at balancing your body to reduce the risk of physical illness. During maintenance, you will need less-frequent sessions and your protocol will switch every three to six months to focus on each individual body system. Some body systems addressed include: the brain and neurological system; the heart and circulatory system; the liver and detoxification system; the immune system, and the digestive system.

Health is an ongoing journey. With Naturopathic Medicine, we partner with you to help make the journey rewarding.

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What's In It for You?

So, I gave you a lot of theoretical information and if you didn't skip ahead, you now have a working understanding of Naturopathic Medicine. Now, let's look at some specific examples of Naturopathic Medicine in practice to see if this approach could possibly benefit you or someone you know.

Ten Common Health Challenges Where Naturopathic Medicine Can Be Helpful

① ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

People who are struggling with anxiety and depression can benefit from the reduction of these symptoms by using a Naturopathic approach that is person-specific. Anxiety and depression are not inherently diseases from a Naturopathic perspective. They are symptoms. They may be chronic, meaning they are present for many years and take on a disease-like quality, but they are still symptoms.

Treating the symptom never results in long-term correction, since the symptoms are the body's response to

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something being out of balance. With Naturopathic Medicine, the goal is to uncover the underlying cause of these symptoms. These symptoms affect people differently and the cause varies from person to person. As such, it obviously stands to reason that the approach for each person has to be unique. In the general medical model, there are certainly times when drug intervention is important — for instance, where the symptoms are so extreme that they prevent the person from functioning the way they are used to functioning in terms of their daily life or if the person is a danger to themselves or others. Short-term drug therapy in these extreme cases can be helpful. This is, however, not a long-term solution. For one person, their symptoms may have developed from having traumatic emotional experiences. For someone else, it may be as a result of physical trauma such as a head injury. Quite commonly, especially in women, I have seen these symptoms develop as a result of hormonal changes or blood sugar irregularities. Allergies and the inability of the body to detox can also result in these symptoms. I could go on, but I hope you get the point.

If the cause is different for different people, the approach must address that cause. A Naturopathic approach to these emotional disturbances is holistic. It involves counseling, nutrition, and other natural strategies based on the individual. Things like antidepressants and anti-anxiety medication rarely treat the root cause so people end up taking these drugs for many years without a true sense of relief. Naturopathic Medicine, by contrast, may work *along with* standard drug therapy (which provides symptomatic relief), when appropriate, to put the body in a more balanced place for a long-term resolution — with

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drug therapy merely one component in a broader course of treatment.

② HORMONAL CONDITIONS

Although hormonal conditions can be extremely difficult, they can be treated effectively with Naturopathic Medicine the moment the root causes are identified. These causes may include stress-management, thyroid issues, infertility, fibroids, anxiety, depression, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS), low testosterone (the infamous “Low-T”), or any menopause-related issues.

Hormones are biochemical signals that tell the body what to do. A disruption in that message is usually resulting from an *overabundance* (not necessarily over-production... which is conclusion healthcare providers mistakenly come to when there is too much of something), or, a *lack* of specific hormones (not necessarily under-production).

Full disclosure: I am not musically inclined. Nonetheless, the way I like to look at it is that hormones are like instruments in a symphony. Each one increases or decreases in sync with the others to provide the perfect melody. If one instrument is off beat (lower/higher volume, wrong timing, etc.), this results in a completely different melody than that intended.

With that same reasoning, the Naturopathic approach really aims at uncovering the cause of the imbalance. The rampant prescription of hormones is very dangerous. Like everything else, I do think there are extreme situations where taking prescription hormones is necessary, such as, a case where someone has had their thyroid (the gland

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that makes thyroid hormones) surgically removed. However, since this symphony of hormones is so delicate, and the body has a sort of thermostat in the brain (the pituitary gland) that acts like the symphony conductor, it isn't exactly wise to randomly add extra hormones to the body.

Externally-introduced hormones will always have an effect on the conductor as well as the other hormones — as they will have to adjust to accommodate this change — with the resultant melody, or symptoms, unpredictable.

One common problem we encounter is the overuse of hormonal birth-control methods. Again, for some women, nothing is better than getting relief from a horrible period. I get it. However, introducing a steady supply of synthetic hormones into a system that is out of balance may very well cause long-term issues.

The most commonly prescribed hormone for women is estrogen — both before and after menopause. If the dose is high enough, a continual delivery of estrogen (or progesterone, the other dominant female hormone) completely overrides the natural hormonal cycle, producing what I call a 'fake period' in cycling women or a 'Pandora's Box' in post-menopausal women.

The truth is, it is impossible to predict what you are going to get as a long-term result because hormones affect different women differently. On extreme sides, some women do well and never see long-term ill effects while others grow fibroids or, worse, breast, ovarian, or uterine cancers. Since extreme side effects usually appear after years of exposure, sometimes even years after the woman

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discontinues the hormones, it is hard to make a definitive link between the two.

Many doctors and, of course, the makers of these hormones still, as of the writing of this book (2017), insist that birth control/hormone use (specifically, estrogen) does not cause cancer or fibroids to grow. I actually agree with them. However, only partially. The correct statement should be that use of birth-control pills, specifically the use of estrogen, does not cause cancer or fibroids to grow in everyone. However, it *does* cause cancer or fibroids in *some* people.

That is a risk that for most women — especially those close to or over the age of 50 (menopause) — can't afford to take. After menopause, fibroids don't usually grow but cancer does. While there are many other factors that contribute to development of cancer, this is one that cannot be ignored due to the epidemic proportion of cancer cases currently among women. To deny that is like saying cigarette smoking does not cause lung cancer because there are people who smoke who never get lung cancer. Clearly, now, in 2017, that is a faulty statement. Cigarettes do not cause lung cancer to grow in everyone, only some people. Some people are willing to take that risk, but they mostly do it with the full knowledge that lung cancer is a very real possibility.

The difference is, most people who take hormones — specifically women who take estrogen and men who take testosterone — that I have had discussions with are not fully aware of the risks. The truth is, a lot of these hormones come with an educational packet in extremely fine print that does warn that people with a history of

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certain cancers shouldn't take them. The truth is, a lot of these cancers won't develop until after use.

I once had a healthy patient in her thirties who developed liver tumors. The only prescription drug she had ever taken long term were her birth-control pills to 'manage' her cycle and skin. Two years after stopping the birth control and using Naturopathic therapies, her liver went back to normal. Coincidence? Maybe, but I would not take that risk.

Clearly, the draw toward using hormones to treat certain symptoms is obvious. Hormones can cause almost immediate and miraculous changes in the body because, after all, they are biochemical messengers that tell the body how to behave. That approach, however, cannot usually bring about long-term changes due to the fact that the underlying cause of the initial imbalance, and therefore the symptoms, was never addressed. As you are now painfully aware, the benefits of that approach are often not worth the long-term risks.

A Naturopathic approach is one in which the health of all the glands that make hormones and respond to hormonal signals is carefully supported; helping the conductor and all the instruments get back to the right melody is a far superior approach long term.

In my private practice, hormonal cases make up the bulk of the issues that we help people with. Cancer and fibroids are on an extreme end but more common hormonal symptoms like migraines, weight gain, acne, hot flashes, mood swings, PCOS, and infertility are usually helped

when a holistic approach that looks at the whole person is taken.

③ CHRONIC FATIGUE

While many people turn to caffeine for energy, it is a poor substitute to handle what could be a more insidious condition. I personally like coffee. I don't drink it often because it makes me a little crazy and it drives the people around me nuts because I move way too fast and say way too much. I also don't sleep much with caffeine. On occasion, I tell my patients, it's perfectly okay to have coffee, provided:

- ➔ they don't need it to function;
- ➔ they do not have sleep issues;
- ➔ they are not highly stressed;
- ➔ they don't do it just for the energy;
- ➔ they have no issues with anxiety, and;
- ➔ they do not have high blood pressure or diabetes.



If you are perfectly healthy and have none of the issues mentioned above, an occasional cup of coffee is a nice treat provided you don't add junk to it (but that's a whole other conversation). Fatigue, however, is one of the vaguest symptoms out there. It can be caused by a wide variety of underlying problems.

The best long-term solution to low energy is to really investigate and address the root cause. Like most other symptoms, different things can cause fatigue for different people. For some people, it is easy to spot the problem as

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in the case of insomnia. They don't sleep well so they are tired. Easy! To fix the fatigue, fix the sleep. Job well done to me and my team of doctors and health coaches. Everyone is happy and energetic!

If only every case were so easy. My life as a doctor, however, is not usually that easy. Fatigue can be the result of any one, or combination of, a whole host of abnormalities that include:

- ☛ hormonal imbalances,
- ☛ allergies,
- ☛ adrenal problems,
- ☛ anemia,
- ☛ stress,
- ☛ poor diet,
- ☛ nutritional deficiencies,
- ☛ infections,
- ☛ pain,
- ☛ and drugs.

Clearly, the one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work when it comes to fatigue. Identifying the cause and addressing it appropriately seems to be the only way to fix the problem.

④ DIGESTIVE PROBLEMS

Many digestive problems such as gas, constipation, bloating, diarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), nausea, abdominal pain, ulcers, colitis, Crohn's disease, and heartburn can be effectively handled by Naturopathic Doctors.

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Many people experience some form of digestive disturbance from time to time. Some have significant digestive issues that exist for many years without any real resolution despite expensive tests, procedures, and medications.

One notorious yet fixable digestive disorder is heartburn. Both prescription and over-the-counter heartburn drugs rank among the top drugs consumed by Americans annually. However, this symptom is usually resolved in a matter of days to weeks, depending on the severity, with patients in our office. I still find it hard to comprehend why anyone would need to take heartburn medicine for years. However, when I stop to really look at how this condition is handled in conventional medicine, the reason becomes obvious.

Generally, no matter who the patient is, the standard recommendations include instruction to stay away from acidic food and a prescription for an acid blocker. It seems logical, except nobody ever really gets better. The symptoms are minimized by the drugs but the person is dependent on those drugs to avoid discomfort. If they eat a particularly rich meal one day without taking the medication, the resulting symptoms can be intolerable.

The Naturopathic approach is the direct opposite. Each case is carefully considered and lifestyle changes are recommended based on the apparent cause. Herbs and minerals are usually used to heal and repair the digestive tract and dietary modifications are also recommended but vary significantly from one individual to the next.

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⑤ **CANCER**

One of the features of Naturopathic Medicine, *Nutritional Therapy*, has proved effective in reducing the impact of cancer in the body. As a result, many people now seek out natural therapies as an accompaniment or total alternative to the standard medical treatment of using chemotherapy and radiation. Many people with recurring cases of cancer, after first taking the standard drug route, turn to more natural therapies since the drugs failed to prevent the latest recurrence.

While each case of cancer is unique, I think having the option of using more natural therapies such as nutrition, herbs, vitamins, stress management, or hydrotherapy — whether stand-alone or in conjunction with standard therapies — is vital to quality of life of the patient. The Lifestyle Clinic provides a unique Natural Cancer Consult program that is done remotely to assist anyone dealing with a diagnosis of cancer.

⑥ **DIABETES**

Although type 2 diabetes is a dreaded disease that is growing at an alarming rate, a diabetic can be helped to manage this reversible disease with exercise, diet, and the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.

In my private practice, we see a fairly large number of people with blood sugar irregularities. These include diabetes, pre-diabetes, and hypoglycemia. We check a hemoglobin A1C (a blood test for long-term blood sugar levels) for every new patient as a part of our standard screening. Many people come in undiagnosed with diabetes, simply because they've exhibited no symptoms

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— and because insurance only pays for this test *after* there has been a cause for concern.

I am often surprised at how many people we find with abnormal test results that had never had the test done at their routine doctor visits. Fortunately, we are often able to reverse the progression of the disease and normalize the A1C readings for most patients who follow our protocols. For people who are on insulin or prescription drugs (the most famous is Metformin) for type 2 diabetes, we are generally able to normalize blood sugars and reduce or eliminate a patient's dependence on drugs through lifestyle modification, supplementation, and nutrition.

Diabetes can be a devastating disease, not only for the patient but for the people that care for them after the disease has taken a toll on the body. Long-term high blood sugars lead to high cholesterol, heart disease, fatigue, pain, fibromyalgia, memory loss, vision issues, kidney damage, and multiple other symptoms. The only way to get off the rollercoaster of chasing symptoms is to address the root cause, which is the way the body balances dietary carbohydrates and insulin. That is how we are able to make such great results in terms of disease progression in my practice.

⑦ PAIN

There are different types of pain. Joint pain, muscle pain, headaches, fibromyalgia, and nerve pain are some of the ones I come across often in my practice. If you have been following along, by now you should be able to guess that I am going to say that all pain is not created equal and

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different types of pain need to be addressed differently. And you would be right.

In a standard medical practice, if ten patients walk in complaining of headaches or migraines, chances are, all ten will walk out with a prescription for some version of a painkiller, and quite possibly the same painkiller. Chances are that this painkiller is generally effective and so the prescriber uses it a lot, with a good degree of success. So I completely understand why this would be so.

The problem is, the migraines/headaches come back after the drugs wear off or when the prescription runs out (if this is a chronic problem). Then the patient needs more drugs and, in time, stronger drugs because the symptom will persist as long as the cause for the symptom persists and is not addressed. In this case, the pain is just a symptom.

In acute cases such as a bad injury, clearly, a painkiller is appropriate. However, for more chronic pain, this is not a very effective long-term approach. In my practice, if ten patients walk into our office, regardless of which Naturopathic provider they see, chances are, all ten will leave with a different protocol. To me, this makes complete sense since these are ten different people who have ten different biochemical makeups and ten different reasons why they have this kind of pain.

Clearly, a general approach, just as with the painkillers, could help most of them, but only temporarily. To get rid of the pain, each person must be assessed and addressed individually. On a biochemical level, most pain is the direct result of inflammation. That is why anti-inflammatory

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drugs like aspirin and ibuprofen (NSAIDS) are so popular; they simply work. The trick is, you have to keep taking them to stay out of pain.

This wouldn't be terrible compared to being in pain, except for the fact that long-term use of these types of drugs is associated with nasty side effects like stomach ulcers, heart attacks, strokes, and liver and kidney problems. Needless to say, this is not a good long-term solution.

Naturopathic medicine looks for the cause of the inflammation and pain in order to help a doctor know the right technique that will prove effective in removing or reducing the pain. Some pain is caused by injury, others from drugs, allergic reactions, hormonal changes, dehydration, wear and tear of joints, overuse of muscles, strains, sprains, and a whole host of other possibilities. Addressing the underlying cause is the best way to reduce or eliminate long-term pain and that has to be done on an individual level.

⑧ ALLERGIES

One of the things I enjoy seeing in practice is watching how someone who comes in with a long history of seasonal and environmental allergies improves over the course of our time working together. They are usually pretty skeptical at first and our office is generally a last resort after they have 'tried it all.'

You allergy people know what I'm talking about. The medications, the shots, the allergy testing. You name it, you have tried it, and it hasn't worked long-term.

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Allergies are annoying and disruptive. They affect adults and children alike. Every spring, Americans rush to the closest pharmacy to pick up prescriptions and all manner of over-the-counter drugs to deal with their allergies. For some even more unlucky folks, they deal with those symptoms year-round.

Itchy eyes, runny nose, mucus, itching, coughing, sneezing, headaches, fatigue, and sore throat are some of the many symptoms of environmental allergies. The unfortunate thing is, we have no control over our exposure to some of these common things.

Think about it, what do you do if you go get an allergy test done and it shows that you are allergic to grass or dust or pollen? If you live on this earth, there is a good probability that you will come in contact with something in the environment that triggers the symptoms. Medication is not a long-term solution, and, over time, the medications may actually make allergy symptoms worse.

The solution? By now you know the drill: figure out what the imbalance in the body is and address the root cause. It sounds pretty simple but of course this is a very convoluted route that changes from person to person. A skilled Naturopathic Doctor will always address the body's detoxification pathways when approaching allergy cases. A more fine-tuned approach usually results in significant symptom reduction, and, over time, complete symptom alleviation for most people I work with.

⑨ INSOMNIA

Insomnia is one of those insidious problems that for some people happens without rhyme or reason. The irony is, the

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people who suffer from lack of sleep are usually very tired but the more tired they are, the more difficult it is for them to sleep at night!

I often meet people who have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep uninterrupted during the night. Sometimes these symptoms persist for months or even years and the person adapts to this poor sleeping pattern until it becomes their 'normal.' The standard treatment with sleep medication, again, rarely results in correction of the problem. People therefore become dependent on drugs to fall asleep and maintain sleep while the underlying issue is ignored.

Like everything else, a deeper investigation into the disrupted sleep pattern is necessary for long-term sleep issues. Some of the more common causes that I come across are stress-management issues, blood sugar irregularities, hormonal imbalances, bladder issues, and pain. Correcting these issues usually leads to restoration of normal sleep patterns.

One of the most unusual cases of sleep disturbance that I have seen in practice was with a lady in her sixties. She had been waking up at precisely 3:15 a.m. every morning for over thirty years. We had worked together to correct many of her other issues like allergies, anxiety, and obesity. For some reason, her insomnia persisted even though her body was in a much-improved state.

It wasn't until she revealed during one of our sessions that she'd had a nightmare, in which she was attacked over 30 years ago, that I was able to put the pieces together. She woke up from that dream in a total panic and it was exactly

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3:15 a.m. Somehow, her brain associated that nightmare with trauma and all these years later, she was still waking up at that specific time without ever realizing why.

This explains why prescription or even natural sleep aids never seemed to work. Bringing this knowledge to her consciousness allowed her mind to see it for what it really was — a bad dream. That was instrumental in reducing the traumatic effect and she eventually started sleeping through the night uninterrupted. Without addressing the root cause, it is easy to imagine that this sleep issue would have persisted.

Taking sleep aids for issues that are cardiovascular or blood-sugar driven can also be dangerous as those problems, if left untreated, can be devastating. If you have trouble falling asleep or sleeping through the night, your best long-term solution is to seek out a provider who is invested in finding the underlying issue.

⑩ WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

I actually wrote an entire book on this topic. It's called *Not Just Weight*. You should read it! Weight is my absolute favorite and least favorite topic to discuss. Weight is a big deal. Whether you are overweight or underweight, if your body isn't maintained in a range that feels good to you, it can cause a lot of emotional and physical stress. The issue with weight is that there is an overemphasis on the number on the scale, without too much thought behind why the number is what it is in the first place.

Weight, especially for women, is a complicated mix of lifestyle, hormones, metabolic balance, and mental-emotional balance. For some lucky people, all they need is

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to eat right and exercise (that advice is so 1990's). For many others, it is not that simple. While an appropriate diet and regular exercise are the cornerstones of health, most people I work with have resistant weight that doesn't always respond to a change in diet or exercise. These stubborn weight issues generally need further investigation to uncover and address the root cause. These causes vary widely and can range from hormonal imbalances to stress and digestive issues.

The naturopathic approach gets to the core of weight issues and removes the struggle to achieve and maintain an appropriate weight. The *notjustweight.com* online program is specifically dedicated to providing the guidance, support, and tools necessary to achieve and maintain an appropriate weight. Our dedicated Naturopathic Lifestyle Coaches are specially trained to partner with our members on their health journey.

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Patient Stories

Trimeasha L.

It took me two years, multiple signs, and feeling hopeless for me to make the decision to make my first appointment at the lifestyle clinic with Dr. Parkes. I had been to several doctors for stomach pains, menstrual pains, allergies, fatigue, and extreme weight gain in a short amount of time. The medical doctors couldn't find anything *wrong* to diagnose me. Most people would be thankful, but I knew something wasn't right. I wasn't feeling myself and as time went on, I was starting to feel worse. As I mentioned it took me two years and three signs to FINALLY make an appointment. First sign — I saw Dr. Parkes on *It's Time to Be Healed*, a local television show. Her style and results caught my attention, however I didn't make the decision to make an appointment at that time. After realizing I wasn't going to get any help from a medical doctor, I had decided my next best thing was to go to a naturopathic doctor. Second sign — While speaking with someone about my choice to go to a naturopathic doctor, Dr. Parkes name came up, and I thought I know that name, but again I didn't make the decision to go just yet. Third and final

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sign — I saw Dr. Parkes on *It's Time to be Healed*, a second time. I knew then, that is where I needed to go.

During the first appointment, Dr. Parkes went over my “pre-assessment” with me. All I could think about was, she’s got her work cut out for her and I’m sure she was thinking the same about me. I went in with a list of things that included, unexpected weight gain, diagnosed with thyroid problems, headaches, allergies, menstrual issues, fibroids, memory loss, sleep issues, anxiety, and lack of energy. Dr. Parkes went over the plan she created for my needs, which included diet change, and supplements. That night I decided to travel the road to a better “lifestyle.” Now, if you know me, the hardest thing was going to be to cut out French fries and chocolate chip cookies. Guess what, I cut that junk out. I started feeling better within the first week and my family and friends also noticed a difference. Also, the medical doctors saw an improvement. I remember going to a follow-up appointment with the endocrinologist, after being on the thyroid-assist supplement for less than 2 weeks, and my test results came back within normal levels. In addition to my thyroid, my memory was getting better, I had much more energy, my moods were better, and I lost over 30lbs in less than 4 months. I can say that my overall lifestyle changed for the better. I still go to Dr. Parkes for all things new, and check-ins to make sure I’m staying on track. My latest project for Dr. Parkes is stress management, specifically how my body handles stress. I’m sure we will get through this one, just as we did all others.

I recommend the lifestyle clinic and the Not Weight Program for anyone who has given up hope.

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Sig A.

My big "aha" moment was when I had ringworm all over my body a few years ago. I first tried a store bought cream, that only spread the ringworm and made it worse. Then I tried a stronger steroid based cream that a doctor prescribed. Still nothing, and only continued to get worse. Then Dr. Parkes prescribed a tincture of various herbs that I would drop into the back of my throat (and it subsequently got absorbed into my stomach). The ringworm faded the next day after taking it, and the day after that it was essentially gone. This blew my mind! An herbal remedy that I ingested worked better than a research proven technique that attacked where the rash actually was (on the skin).

Tyra J.

After trips to many other physicians with no answers for my condition, I made an appointment with the best Naturopathic physician around. It truly was divine intervention that led me to Dr. Parkes and she was able to accurately diagnose, treat, and restore my health. Her compassion and "no-nonsense" approach resonated with me and I will forever be grateful to her. Her thorough assessment saved my life.

I will always remember when she gave me one of the components of my treatment plan: the "Grocery list." For a few days, I thought, "what am I going to eat?" I quickly realized that my body had been eating unhealthy food and when you give it healthy that's what it craves. It is amazing how different you feel when you put good, whole food in

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your body instead of processed food. It is true that food is your medicine. I look and feel so much better that I have changed my lifestyle.

Maria P.

Dr. Parkes literally saved my life. I found the program 3 years ago when I was at the lowest point in my health. I had recently gone through treatment for breast cancer. I weighed 267 pounds. I was diabetic and I had high blood pressure. I was taking eight different prescription drugs. I had no energy. I couldn't sleep. I was having hot flashes all the time. I was depressed and anxious all the time. Just writing that brings me to tears. Because of your help, today I am happy, healthy, and cancer free. I have lost 89 pounds and I take no prescription drugs. I am training for my 3rd half marathon this spring and I look and feel better than I did 20 years ago. I no longer have diabetes or high blood pressure. I am not depressed or anxious. I have none of the symptoms I did when I met you. Thank you for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself. You have given me a second chance to live and enjoy my family. Thank you!

Louise C.

My name is Louise. I began my health journey in November 2012. My current weight at the time was 274 pounds. I truly believe, I tipped the scales at 300 plus (afraid to admit – clothes size up to 24/26). I braved the scale at the reading of 274 (my clothes size then was

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20/22). Not proud to admit, but used diet pills/quick fix methods in the past to rid the weight. As result of these, each time resulted in a hospital visit. At the time, health risks were high blood pressure, high cholesterol and threatening to becoming a diabetic. All of which, health concerns were on both sides of my family. Needless to say, didn't want to become another statistic.

This weight and the health problems scared me — a huge wake up call but was stuck in a NIGHTMARE. I begin to think "will I see my 50th birthday?" I thought for a moment, I may not be around too much longer, unless I make some positive changes soon. I became tired of repeating and making failed promises to myself and family (who loved me) — tired of being tired. I remember having a conversation with a dear friend about how I felt. She shared some knowledge about a Naturopathic Doctor she recently was visiting and helped her a lot. At the time, I never heard of this kind of doctor. Initially, I thought "wow — this is not a real doctor." I researched and stated "yes — why not, I tried a lot of other things." Unknown to me, I was completely wrong. Dr. Kivette Parkes was not only real but I give credit for assisting me save/prolong my life (through better health — diet/nutrition). My good friend gave me a coupon to assist with my initial visit. Prior to my first visit, I became ashamed of how big I managed to become and started drinking a lot of water and eliminated sodas from diet. The first few visits was actually getting to know me and learning how I slept, what type of foods I ate, how much water intake daily, how I handle stress, how often (type) of bowel movements, etc. Initially, I felt like my goodness all of this is unnecessary. Actually, looking back Dr. Parkes needed to understand my story in

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order to develop a plan for my health journey. At my first visit, I weighed in at 272. This was a small improvement and the beginning (I can do this).

Initially, Dr. Parkes started me on a detox plan for 21-days that assisted her in ridding some of the toxins out of my body and as a result, I seen some weight loss. By the end of this cleanse I lost 14-pounds. Along the way she developed many eating plans for me to follow. I must admit, my stubbornness she had to adjust those meal plans a lot. I have been on many meal plans such as eating nothing but vegetables for 10-days (lost 10-pounds); Ketone Diet (lost 5-pounds in one weekend); two smoothies daily and one meal, etc. As you could see, they all worked but I got tired and kept going back and forth. Dr. Parkes expressed patience with all my struggles. My goodness, I had a lot of struggles along the way. She offered and developed many more diet plan ideas, adjusted my supplements (vitamins) and offered exercise tips in which I could follow. My biggest struggle was the meals (sticking to one plan longer than a week). Initially, my visits went from bi-weekly to every 90-days and now back monthly. I must admit, the fees are minimal compared to Emergency Rooms/Hospital visits due to illness – from my quick fad diets. As my eating habits improved and weight loss increased, I noticed my visits to Physicians/Emergency Rooms/Hospitals had vanished. Approximately, within 1-year, my doctor visits were basically for wellness checks. I witnessed my health/body transform before my eyes. My doctors/family/others noticed the change as well. My confidence in self rose to a new height, I never seen before. I managed to get into a

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size 14 — WOW!!! I was amazed and did it without any starvation diets or quick fad tricks.

A healthier me and better nutrition assisted with my next phase — becoming a runner again. The journey started back in May 2015, I was physically able to complete two 5Ks (3.1 miles); one 4-miler; and one 10K (6.2miles) all in 2015. I continued in 2016, completing my 1st Half Marathon (13.2 miles — March); one 4K (2.48miles) and two additional Half Marathons (one in May and other in October). Prior to my 4K race, I had a health scare and needed to be monitored closely for 30-days with a heart monitor. I thought my run journey was over. I was cleared to continue. Needless to say, my best time for the Half Marathon was completed in the middle of Hurricane Matthew (10/08/16); best time (PR — personal record completing in 3 hours and 18 seconds). I mentioned both, two adversities, I pushed through and came out on top — by the Grace of God's will. I am happy to report all my races were completed injury free. I contribute much of my success to a healthier lifestyle. Much appreciation to all the staff at The Life Style Clinic for saving and prolonging my life (a better me).

I continue to challenge myself each day throughout all my struggles. My ultimate weight goal 198 to 195 (desire to reach the wonder land) and completing my first Full Marathon (26.2 miles) by my 50th birthday in the spring of 2018. I am confident, I will master both my goals. I have come too far to turn back now.

I truly appreciate all your dedication, support and encouragement of all staff of The Life Style Clinic. *Thanks* is such a small word to show my sincere appreciation!!!

Phyllis G.

It is an honor for me to share my deepest & sincere testimony & experiences while seeing you as my holistic doctor.

I have been seeing Dr. Parkes for over 4 years now when I was diagnosed with breast cancer when I was 39 years old! After having surgery & chemotherapy treatments, I was home one day watching my favorite TV show (*It's Time To Be Healed*) & Dr. Parkes was on that show speaking about what she does as a Naturalist/holistic Dr. which I was immediately drawn to her service from that day until now. Dr. Parkes suggested a regimen for me that helped to rebuild my immune system for years! I have also reversed my diabetes through healthier eating, exercise and high quality nutritional supplements. She also taught me the importance of eating healthy foods, drinking water & to exercise daily which has totally helped to change my lifestyle & helped me to live a long & healthy life!!! Dr. Parkes is very knowledgeable, dependable & is extremely thorough! She calls her patients & has ALWAYS made herself available to make sure that my NEEDS have been met!!! I'll be forever Grateful to God for Dr. Parkes & her staff at The Lifestyle Clinic.

Ken F.

As a general rule I rarely offer narrative or perspective for proprietors. This writing is different... this insight is about life change, it's about health and wellness, declaring a new respect, penchant to live better and appreciate this

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incredible body we have, a temple to honor and take care of.

With a family's history of poor health my wife and I had a treaty to create a new outcome for me and my family. Instead of accepting that diabetes, hypertension and various forms of cancer, would potentially touch my DNA, why not explore a non conventional approach through the genius of Dr. Kivette Parkes. We heard from a source that this Dr. was amazing. Fast forward to a first visit, the source was ever so on point! Brilliant, thoughtful, caring and enterprising, Kivette Parkes changed the game of life for me! First visit.

She took me off all the chemical stuff I took for decades to mask stomach and digestive issues. She was alarmed at the dosage each day, and advised me that their continued use would prove lethally harmful. When I saw her throw these items in her trash, I was sold. She gave me natural and affordable digestive aids from organic food sources.

Now 2 years later, I've not taken 1 prescription drug and it has fostered a life change outstanding that I never thought was in reach. Dr. Parkes is amazing. By word of mouth I've referred several people to her who like me, needed a different intervention to change their life. My very own family physician of 15 years here in Charlotte has marveled at my change in health since my visits and compliance with Dr. Parkes' vision to secure the very best health for me!

Melanie G.

Dr. Parkes rescued me. She listened to me, she believed me, she believed in me and she saved my life. Throughout my childhood and early adulthood, I was always sick and constantly directed on a path of antibiotics, steroid shots, allergy shots, prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications. No doctor ever asked me what I was eating. No doctor ever asked me about my life and the big picture. I was athletic and a healthy weight, so I assumed I was putting healthy food and medicines into my body. All that changed when my life started to slip away at the age of 30. In a matter of two months, my body went from being "healthy" to suffering a full fledge attack by my own immune system on my neuromuscular system. I went from working full-time and being very active socially to suffering debilitating full-body muscle spasms, constant extreme pain in my muscles and joints and excruciating bouts of nerve pain surging through my body. Months of specialists, MRI's, blood tests, and other diagnostics led to more confusion, more pain and more medications. I was completely isolated. I felt like the doctors didn't believe me. In fact, I don't feel like they ever saw ME; they only saw bits and pieces of my deteriorating body. Finally, in February 2013, about five months after the trauma began, I found a doctor who referred me to Dr. Parkes. The doctor wanted to refer me to more specialists and add more medications, but I had had enough and knew that I would be dead if I continued down the path of traditional medicine. I asked for alternative treatment, and Dr. Parkes was the answer.

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Dr. Parkes is the embodiment of grace, truth and knowledge with just the right amount of toughness. The type of toughness that is needed to inspire lifestyle changes and to make you believe that you can do it. From the beginning, I was skeptical about her holistic approach, but I had no other choice. I was not ready to surrender my life and live in a shell of who I used to be. Within three or four months under her care, I was off all those horrible medications and healed to the point that I could return to work. Just four months after doctors told me that I would never walk normal again, I would never work again, and I needed to begin modifying my life to a long term plan of dependency on medications and care givers, Dr. Parkes facilitated a miracle in my life! Her plan of targeted nutrition and natural supplements began to reverse the effects of a lifetime of toxins. Every step of the way, she has listened to me, encouraged me, empowered me, reprimanded me (when I desperately needed it) and believed in me. I have kept her by my side ever since! She restored my body and allowed me to regain my health, my independence, and my full-time job. I am now married and my loving husband and I are expecting our first child in three months!

I recommend Dr. Parkes to everyone I know. Dr. Parkes healed me, and she continues to be a light in my life and the life of my growing family. She sees you, your whole person. She listens to you. She heals you and she teaches you how to have confidence in your health and your body. She is a life-saver and one of the greatest blessings in my life!

Kathy S.

When I first started the *Not Just Weight* program, I was tired, fat and angry. My body had betrayed me. I couldn't sleep at night. I had all sorts of pain and I was taking 7 different prescription drugs for cholesterol, diabetes, blood pressure and pain at the age of 54.

Fast forward two years later and I barely recognize my life. I have a new career and a new body. I lost 52 lbs and I am no longer diabetic and I have normal blood pressure. I am completely drug free. Dr. Parkes helped me to recognize that my stressful job and lack of time to take care of myself was to blame for my poor health. I learned to make myself a priority and I just got back from a cruise where I wore a bathing suit in public for the first time since my twenties. I couldn't say thank you enough to express how grateful I am for this new chance at life.

That's All, Folks!

There you have it! You are now empowered with the knowledge you need to make informed choices when it comes to your healthcare, and the care of your family and friends. You now understand what Naturopathic Medicine is and you have had a front seat to my personal take on how this all works.

My closing advice to you is to keep striving for better. Question convention. Take a closer look at how you take care of your health. Reevaluate some of your choices. Read. Don't believe everything you read. Understand that one size does not fit all and you deserve a customized approach to your health.

Get a team. It should include your primary care doctor, a counselor or therapist for your mental-emotional health, a spiritual practice (because this is a part of you as a person), and a Naturopathic Doctor. You should also consider having a resource for exercise and physical fitness as well as organic whole food. My practice really makes every effort to help people sort through the many options available in the wellness space so they can take charge of their health.

My team at The Lifestyle Clinic — www.lifestyle-clinic.com — and online at www.notjustweight.com are available to

answer any questions you may have. We also provide free phone consultations and well as educational seminars to groups/organizations and online courses.

Our member-only lifestyle coaching service is available to anyone in the United States despite location. That program pairs you with a specially trained coach to help you achieve the wellness you deserve.

Now that we are officially friends, please follow me on Facebook and Instagram!

<https://www.facebook.com/drparkesND/>

Instagram: [Dr.Parkes](#)

I sincerely thank you for taking the time to check out this little book. My prayer is that it may inspire you in some small way to look at your health in a different way.

Best in Health!

Solve Your HEALTH Puzzle

A Guide to *Better Health*
Through Naturopathic Medicine

This book gives a rather practical view of Naturopathic Medicine as solution to chronic lifestyle-related diseases and illnesses like diabetes, allergies and fatigue.

If you are curious about a natural approach to your health, look no further. This quick-read provides powerful insight into the world of natural health through the first hand narrative of Naturopathic physician, Dr. Kivette Parkes.

About Dr. Parkes

Dr. Kivette Parkes is the author and creator of the Not Just Weight Program. She has a simple, no-nonsense approach when it comes to getting people the improved health they desire. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Biology with minors in Chemistry and Mathematics from Sacred Heart University, a Masters degree in Human Nutrition as well as a Doctorate of Naturopathic Medicine from the University of



Bridgeport. As a gifted speaker and health motivator Dr. Parkes has appeared in radio, television, and written many articles discussing her holistic view of health. Dr. Parkes believes that health education is the path to sustained wellness.

www.lifestyle-clinic.com
www.notjustweight.com