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Introduction

In the United States and Western Europe, we are caught in a health crisis. Not only is there an obesity epidemic, which leads to increased incidence of certain types of

cancer, a range of cardiovascular diseases and other lifestyle conditions like type 2 diabetes, This is also symptomatic of a deeper range of illnesses.

In the West anti-depressant and antianxiety medications are always in the top ten of annual prescriptions. These products sell in the billions of dollars every single



year without fail. On top of that, in the United States in particular, there is an opioid epidemic.

For the longest time, doctors have been prescribing very powerful opiate-based medications. People have gotten used to these. In fact, they're so dependent that they found a way to unleash the full pain-killing power of prescription medications like OxyContin and hydrocodone.

The result is an opiate epidemic that has resulted in thousands upon thousands of overdose deaths in the United States. The carnage doesn't look like it's going to be stopping any time soon.

The common threat that unites all these sad scenarios is the fact that in the West, we have forgotten about wellness. We really have. The traditional Western view of wellness is very restricted and, given what's going on, on the ground, quite short-sighted.

Traditional Western medicine's attitude towards wellness is built on the assumption that the body and the mind are separate. They are not joined, they are not related in any way, but they are separate.

Just as importantly, whatever treatments are created for either body or mind, have to be based on biochemical compounds. In fact, it's only been recently that we have steered towards the direction of biochemistry. Prior to this, it's mostly just hard chemistry.

This idea of the body and mind being separate has led to doctors treating the symptoms but overlooking the disease. It's impossible to treat the body without addressing the mind and the spirit.

Unfortunately, in the West, the spiritual component of wellness is hardly mentioned at all. In fact, people get really antsy and uncomfortable the moment the idea of spirit enters any conversation. It's like it's completely off-limits to "credible" scientific investigation.

On top of all of this, the typical diagnosis for physical ailments leaves out the attitude, mindset as well as emotional configuration of the patient. In fact, it's only been recently that general-practice physicians have factored in lifestyle considerations.

Chapter 1

Rediscovering the Importance of Lifestyle

In the world of traditional Western medicine, the idea of lifestyle medicine is quite recent. In fact, the medical institutions in Western countries only began taking this very seriously starting in the 1930s, but in a very substantial way starting in the 1960s.



Prior to those points in time, the whole idea of changing your lifestyle to improve your health outcomes was considered quaint or even superstitious. By and large Western doctors focused on chemicals and surgery to get people better.

Thankfully, we have overcome such thinking because as it turns out, lifestyle provides input to the human body on so many levels. These inputs are not inconsequential. They really go a long way in making you who you are. Accordingly, if there are any problems with these inputs, you are sure to feel the consequences.

This sea of change in the rank-and-file doctors' impression of lifestyles' impact on overall health signals a matching change in medical professionals' view of the body-and-mind connection. Starting in the 1930s and coming to a head in the 1960s and following decades, the previously thought of iron wall between body and mind started to crumble.

Lifestyle is a summation of that because your lifestyle provides inputs on different levels. It provides a nutritional input and a social input. Your work conditions have a very significant impact on your well-being.

Stress can either push you forward or drag you down. This applies across the board. Your ability to mentally focus is part of the equation. Believe it or not your financial state plays a big role as well.

Finally, tying all of this together is your spiritual aspiration. You may not be a particularly religious person, but everybody has a spiritual component regardless of whether we wish to recognize it or not. All of these inputs work together. They flow through each other, and they impact each other in a very significant way.

The big problem here is the fact that human beings are actually being pushed from different angles. All of these are inputs. What you choose to eat in any given day has a tremendous effect on your overall well-being.

Take the case of magnesium. Do you feel irritable? Do you feel sad for no reason? Do you often get out of bed in a bad mood? Does it seem like things don't quite work out for you or at least you feel like things aren't panning out?

Well, you might want to consider the amount of magnesium in your diet. Fairly recent nutritional studies show that deficiencies in magnesium, which a lot of people suffer from, impact a range of mental, emotional and physical states.