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We Shouldn't Have Burnt The Witches: Philosophy And Cancer Treatment

By Simon Mitchell

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1000 years ago in Europe pre-Christian tribes originally had a Goddess culture – a matriarchy where the earth and nature and their cycles and secrets were revered. In pre-industrial societies illness was not seen as a 'random assault from outside' but as a deeply significant life event integral to the sufferer's whole being – spiritual, moral, physical and life course – past, present and future. Dis-ease was interpreted as packed with moral, spiritual and religious messages as one of the many ways through which 'God revealed his will to mankind'. Other philosophies of medicine such as Ayurvedic or Tibetan think similarly, in these, dis-ease has a karmic aspect.

Around the tenth century in Europe – after the so called 'Dark Ages' – women, the original stewards of the land (men did animal husbandry), were dispossessed of it by the new patriarchies of the Church and State. This male hierarchy hid the things they were most afraid of, namely the fact that it is women who hold the key to the processes and powers of life. They took them as their own, decreeing laws about how we should behave to impose control and inventing 'original sin'. Allied to this there came a prolonged persecution of women, especially any of those involved in healing. Some sources estimate about 5 – 9 million women were destroyed across Europe during this persecution. Essentially the role of women as healers and midwives was discouraged and home-making and its many associated skills is still regarded as a worthless career according to our primarily fiscal values based on GDP.

When a patriarchy takes over a matriarchy as a fundamental paradigm shift, one of the main things that happens is that 'healing' and 'spirituality' are separated out as an instrument of control. The world of spirit and physic were separated and became even more so during the great male 'Age of Reason' that began with Descartes and continued with Newton, the tail-end of which many are presently clinging to in desperation and a degree of applied self-interest.

Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650) was a central influence on the 17th century revolution that began modern science and philosophy. His Method of Doubt was published in 1637:

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"I resolved to reject as false everything in which I could imagine the least doubt, in order to see if there afterwards remained anything that was entirely indubitable".

The philosophy of Cartesian dualism became part of our science, where the mind and the body are seen as essentially separate. The self, the conscious being that is me was seen as essentially non-physical. Misguidedly (it was not Descartes intention) this philosophy contributed to the mechanistic and rational philosophy of the universe adopted by our culture. Descartes was one of the first people to suggest that phenomena could be understood by breaking them down into constituent parts and examining each minutely. His view of the human body as a machine functioning within a mechanistic universe took prevalence within the Age of Reason.

"Consider the human body as a machine. My thought compares a sick man and an ill-made clock with my idea of a healthy man and a well made clock".

This attention to analytical detail is still at the heart of our scientific research methodologies. As a result Western medicine has produced World saving vaccines and antibiotics. It has created drugs and surgical techniques that do utterly amazing things. It has virtually eliminated all the serious communicable diseases (in the First World) such as leprosy, plague, tuberculosis, tetanus, syphilis, rheumatic fever, pneumonia, meningitis, polio, septicaemia. There are very few women dying in childbirth compared to the past. Western medicine has been, and is, a triumph in the face of these problems which worried us back then the way cancer and heart disease worry us today. Even the big medical problems of the of 1930s and 40s have literally vanished.

The age of infectious disease has given way to the age of chronic disorders. The major killers today are heart and vascular disease, chronic degenerative diseases and cancer, largely incurable and increasing in incidence. The strategies that worked so well for all but eliminating acute infectious diseases just dont seem to work for chronic and degenerative conditions.

"The prevalence of asthma, multiple sclerosis, chronic fatigue, immune deficiency syndrome, HIV and a host of other debilitating conditions is increasing. Conventional biomedicine – so strikingly successful in the treatment of overwhelming infections, surgical and medical emergencies and congenital defects, has been unable to stem the tide of these conditions".

James Gordon M.D., Washington, D.C.

Even during the time of Sir Isaac Newton the human body was viewed as an intricate biological machine. The Universe was an orderly, predictable but divine mechanism, a grand clockwork. Although hundreds of years have passed, Western scientific medicine still holds the same basic philosophy, but are more sophisticated in studying biological mechanisms at a molecular level.

The first Newtonian approaches were essentially surgical. The body was seen as if it were a complex plumbing system. If it went wrong the offending piece was removed or bypassed. These days instead of using knives, drugs are often used to do more or less the same things.

Humans though are far more than walking sacks of chemicals. The animating life-force central to other

medical systems is an energy that is not addressed by modern scientific methodology and there are no Western medical models that explain what it is and what it does. It is misguided by the concept that all illnesses are cured by physically repairing or eliminating abnormal cells. This is partly due to a conflict between Western and Eastern philosophies and has its roots in the division of science and religion along with the destruction of folk medicine in both U.S. and Europe.

Cancer cannot be treated effectively under a philosophy of reductionism. Scientific cancer research has failed to find a cure because it is looking in the wrong places with the wrong tools. Cancer needs to be understood as a whole disease in relation to each individual's experience and the culture of which they are part. It has multiple causes that vary with each patient. The strategies that worked so well for tackling acute infectious diseases are inappropriate for dealing with chronic and degenerative conditions. Cancer patients can be at best increasingly patched up by orthodox treatments but at spiralling health care costs.

Simon Mitchell

This is an extract from 'Don't Get Cancer' a new ebook available only at:
<http://www.simonthescribe.co.uk/don'tget1.html>

Risks of Tanning Beds – Not all they are hyped up to be...

By Adam Murray

This is one of many articles posted weekly on

The risks of tanning beds aren't all that it's hyped up to now—a—days. For example, all of the skin cancer horror stories that you hear about all came from people who went about tanning the wrong way 20 to 30 years ago. You see, skin cancer has a latency of about 20–30 years. That long ago almost everyone that that getting a sunburn would fade into a nice looking tan, so most people would go to the beach and keep up with a pattern of getting sun burnt. This is what causes skin cancer, the repetitiveness of getting sun burnt. So there is common misconception of the risks of tanning beds. It's not all cancer in a box as many people say.

Some other risks of tanning beds are your eyes. There is some risk if you choose not to wear safety eyewear, or the goggles. This is a requirement for all tanning salons to provide safety eyewear, but no one can actually make you wear them. Without wearing them, the risks of tanning beds increase. You can get an early form of cataracts and you could even have temporary or complete blindness. Although using the safety equipment can leave almost unnoticeable white circles around your eyes, the risk of not using them does not make up for it.

You can reduce the risks of tanning beds by not staying in them for too long. If you notice that after your tanning session that you got burnt, then the next time you go you need to reduce your time a little. Getting sun burnt is the worse thing you can do to your skin. Also, to reduce risk, be sure to wear the goggles for your eyes.

Adam Murray is currently the webmaster and author of several websites,

, is one of his newer additions.

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