

## Introduction

# A New Paradigm of Healing

... for there is no light of justice or temperance or any of the higher ideas which are precious to souls in the earthly copies of them: they are seen through a glass dimly: and there are few who, going to the images, behold in them the realities, and these only with difficulty.

from Phaedrus by Plato



Figure 1 Rotation of the Elements

At the conclusion of a five-day health summit held in Korea during September 2007, the World Health Organisation (WHO) director for the Western Pacific region, Shigeru Omi, predicted that 'lifestyle diseases' could double by the year 2015, warning that they were already at epidemic proportions. He went on to say that unless strenuous efforts were put in place to counter the spread of such chronic ailments as cancer, heart disease, diabetes and obesity, "36 million people [in the region] will die of these diseases by 2015, nearly half of them before they turn 70". He further explained that the vast number of cases were preventable; the main causes being an unhealthy diet, lack of physical activity and smoking. He called for strategies to be urgently implemented so as to halt the endemic of chronic diseases, which according to WHO are the leading cause of death in the world.

Science and medicine have produced successful remedies and strategies for managing these diseases, but in terms of stemming their epidemic nature it appears to be beyond their control. The economic impact of these diseases averages out to be about 7% of Gross Domestic Product worldwide and is expected to increase substantially as current projections predict considerable increases in their spread. No longer just confined to the developed world, the epidemic is spreading to undeveloped countries, which until recently were more focused on managing epidemic levels of communicable diseases. Chronic diseases in undeveloped countries are now on a par with communicable disease.

A remedy has to be forthcoming if the world wants to arrest this global catastrophe. Medical science clearly states that the causes of these chronic diseases are lifestyle choices, hence the name 'lifestyle diseases'. Yet,

even though science can identify the changes that people need to make to successfully stop the expansion of the epidemic, it lacks the capacity to motivate people towards making sustainable changes to their lifestyle. Research has shown conclusively that sustained behavioural interventions, including changes to dietary habits, increased physical activity and tobacco control collectively have a major impact on reducing the rates of these chronic diseases, in a relatively short period of time. The part of the solution that presents the biggest challenge is motivating people to make *sustainable* changes.

Public health authorities work hard at trying to educate the general populace through diverse media campaigns, as they are well aware of the long-term economic implications if the epidemic is not halted. They have developed comprehensive programs of education that explain the causes and outcomes of continuing these 'disease-causing' lifestyles. They have even resorted to very graphic 'fear' advertisements on TV and product packaging as a means to motivate people to choose differently. Despite these attempts to educate people and have them become more aware of the consequences of their choices, people continue to make unhealthy choices, evidenced by the rapid increases in the prevalence of these diseases.

Until a health model is forthcoming that can create sustainable wellness behaviours, unmanageable escalations in lifestyle diseases will result in more premature deaths and insurmountable costs to health consumers and the taxpayer. An expanded approach to healthcare is needed that is able to build upon current medical and scientific knowledge, by motivating people to voluntarily adopt new lifestyles that create and maintain wellness and health.

According to WHO, the evidence is overwhelming that prevention is possible when sustained actions are directed both at individuals and families, as well as addressing the broader social, economic and cultural triggers for these diseases. When enough individuals and families make sustainable choices around lifestyle, they will impact directly on the social, economic and cultural behaviours of the community. The critical mass of people needed to initiate social and cultural change is quite small, but to be a catalyst they will need to understand how to make sustainable choices through living life with more awareness. It is evident that a plan for health reform based on fear has not been effective. This would suggest that a health paradigm based on love might be a successful alternative.

A radical new health model that is based on love and able to stem the lifestyle disease epidemic is presented in this book. This new solution is capable of inspiring people to make sustainable lifestyle choices based on love, but can only be implemented through individuals learning how to transform the priorities of their hearts. This model is an approach to wellness founded on the etymology of the words “health” and “disease”.

The word “health” originated from the Old English *hælp*, meaning “wholeness”, which shared the same root as the Old English *hal*, meaning “hale”, which also meant to be “whole”. This included other words like *hælan*, which meant “to heal”, and *halig*, which meant “to be holy or sacred”. It is this last association of the words’ etymology that inspires this new model of healing. It is based on the idea that health is associated with being holy or sacred. One of the etymological meanings for the words “sacred” and “holy” is binding, which is similar to the origin of the word “religion”, meaning to bind fast, a

reference to a bond between humans and God. This was the basis for the belief that “health” originally referred to being in a state of “oneness with God”.

The etymology of the word “disease” complements the word “health” in establishing a wellness model based on relationship. The word “disease” comes from a Latin root. The first syllable “dis”, means “not”, with the second syllable, “ease”, sharing the same root as the word “comfort”, from the Latin *adjacens*. From this arose the word adjacent, meaning “next to or nearby”. It could be perceived that there is an ease or comfort in being nearby or close to someone or something else. Combining the two syllables resulted in the definition that disease meant to be “not nearby” or “not next to” someone, suggesting separation. It can be deduced that a state of separation or isolation is the original meaning of the word disease.

With regards to this “separation” being the cause of disease, Dr. Dean Ornish in his book *Love and Survival* presents extensive scientific research with results clearly demonstrating that loneliness and isolation have measurable influences on compromising health and wellbeing. Conversely, his findings also revealed that people recovering from illness convalesced more quickly when integrated into a community. Several of the studies illustrated statistically how people who were integrated into communities appeared to exhibit lower incidences of lifestyle disease and improved rates of recovery from sickness.

If experiencing community, particularly sacred community, is the means for achieving health, it can be understood why chronic diseases are at epidemic proportions. The very nature of the developed world’s modern lifestyle has left little time for developing community, let alone room for that which is sacred or

holy. This is evidenced by many people in the developed world replacing spiritual values with consumerism and pleasure seeking. Given the definition of health as inspired by its etymology and the current global trend for ignoring the holy and sacred aspects of life, it follows that people find it difficult to develop sustainable behaviours that would create wellness.

This will also explain why science and medicine are impotent in motivating a critical mass to make voluntary lifestyle changes. Science understands the type of lifestyle that can cure chronic disease, however, its exclusion of things unquantifiable like spirituality and love means it will never find the sustainable solution to having people choose a healthier lifestyle.

The epidemic also poses the question as to why religion, which has had the mandate to promote the sacred and holy, has also failed to stem the escalation of chronic disease. Religions all over the world claim to promote a relationship with the Divine, and yet the expanding epidemic of chronic disease is a global issue. This failure by religion and the established religious authorities would suggest that their understanding and approach to honouring the sacred and holy is also lacking. They have failed to teach their followers what is required to be in relationship with the Divine. If religion and science, as the two key stewards for guarding human health, are failing, then there is little chance of any other social authority, including government, succeeding.

The transformation in lifestyle required to combat this epidemic cannot be legislated by governments and it cannot be achieved by prescribing pills or surgery. It cannot be massaged or manipulated, nor can it be brought about through baptism. It definitely will not be created through terrorism, and there is nothing money

can buy that will make a difference either. The only thing capable of changing the epidemic are the changes made in the mind and heart of each individual. Each person will have to be inspired and desire to make the changes as an act of self-love.

A change in behaviour that is not an expression of self-love mostly results in failure. The challenge of overcoming obesity is the perfect example. Most people who are overweight compound their obesity by going on diets. How many overweight people have tried several diets only to end up putting on more weight? For healing behaviours to be sustainable, which is essential for successfully combating the lifestyle disease epidemic, new choices around lifestyle will have to be acts of self-love, not self-sacrifice.

Sacrifice connotes attachment; voluntary surrender means non-attachment. When something has to be sacrificed, it is accompanied by resentment. When something is surrendered, it is accompanied by gratitude. It is the latter paradigm that is the focus of this model of healing.

The new model of healing presented in this book is a process the Greeks called *Metanoia*, which simply translated means a “transformation of the heart”. The remedy of this new model is the process each person will need to go through to facilitate this transformation. This book explains in detail the process of this remedy, describing step by step how it is possible to make the transformation from sickness to wellness with gratitude, and more particularly, without the perception of sacrifice. This will result in greater spiritual awareness that naturally creates sustainable wellness and healing.

The normalising of weight, healthier skin, reduced risks of heart disease, diabetes and cancer, improved drug-free

sexual function and vitality for living are some of the natural consequences of adopting this healing paradigm. Aside from the physical benefits, there are significant emotional benefits, including a drug-free resolution of depression, better management of anger and grief and the capacity to experience joy and peace as the norm rather than the exception.

Under this model, the definition of disease is physical and emotional symptoms of illness created by being physically and/or emotionally isolated, especially from that which is sacred and holy, or in other words, being separated from the Divine. Evidence of being in this state of disease, besides the obvious physical symptoms, would be ego-centric conduct accentuated by addictions or avoidance behaviour. It would also include a total disregard for the wellbeing of Mother Earth, disrespect for the sanctity of motherhood and women and a token acknowledgement of God.

Conversely, the definition of health is physical and emotional wellbeing sustained by a sense of individual worth, which is a natural expression of being in relationship with the Divine, the holy and sacred. The evidence of healing would be voluntary self-loving behaviour, honouring body, mind and spirit, as well as loving others through both random acts of kindness and purposeful service. It would also honour the feminine and reverence Mother Earth through sustainable living, with an acknowledgement of God through a constant prayer of gratitude.

When this remedy of Metanoia, which transforms the priorities of the heart, is applied, the healing will create a sustainable intention for wellness. People will choose to live in a manner that is more self-loving, has greater awareness of the planet and makes them more available

to serve others. They will have peace as their priority, substantiated by a constant intention of forgiveness and a desire to love unconditionally. When people are motivated to experience life from this perspective, they will naturally choose to eat more healthily, exercise more regularly, and avoid taking harmful substances into their body. This lifestyle will naturally create healing and sustain wellness.