



Essence of Health

*The greatest achievements
and advancements in the future of
healthcare will not be scientific ones or
new technology. The greatest achievement
is for US to learn to change our
attitudes and behaviors in our
own healthcare practices.*



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“The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet and in the cause and prevention of disease.”

Thomas Edison

The challenge we face is to understand ourselves and govern our own health behaviors. The aim of healthcare should be preventative and not intervention as western medicine has become. Health care is like looking at an iceberg where the tip or 10% represents the doctor appointments, prescription medicines, medical tests, and medical procedures that are done to us; yet, 90% of that iceberg is what we don't see. This 90% comprises what we eat, how active we are, our state of mind, and how we relate to the world. That 90% is what is keeping that 10% afloat and it's what is missing in our lives.

Most chronic diseases that afflict us today such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, stroke, lung cancer, and hearing loss are all caused largely by lifestyle factors. They are preventable with simple lifestyle changes!

90% of what we can affect can be found in the 7 points of good health. Hippocrates said, “The human being can only be understood as a whole.” The **ESSENCE** of good health is dealing with the mind, body, and spirit and imparting ways to affect lifestyle behaviors.

E - Educate
S - Sleep
S - Simplify
E - Exercise
N - Nutrition
C - Create a Happy Place
E - Empower



It is interesting that the definition of doctor originates from the Latin word of the same spelling and meaning. The word is originally an agentive noun of the Latin verb docēre [do'ke:.re] or 'to teach'.

In the dental profession we are constantly educating our patients and ourselves. Thomas Edison stated that, “The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet and in the cause and prevention of disease.”

A healthy brain function is paramount to this role. Alzheimer's is like diabetes of the brain. Insulin problems prevent brain cells from up-taking the important food for brain cells: glucose. However, what they have found is ketone bodies can be used as brain cell nutrients. Ketone bodies are produced from acetyl-CoA mainly in the mitochondrial matrix of hepatocytes when carbohydrates are so scarce that energy must be obtained from breaking down fatty acids. Long-chain omega-3 fatty acids are EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). These are plentiful in fish and shellfish.

Coconut oil is a medium-chain fatty acid and goes directly to your liver to use as energy without an insulin spike. It is also a natural antibiotic killing both bacteria and virus. It has also been shown to help with brain health in Parkinson's, ALS, epilepsy, dementia, schizophrenia, and autism. Daily consumption of coconut oil can keep your brain healthy for a lifetime.

S - Sleep

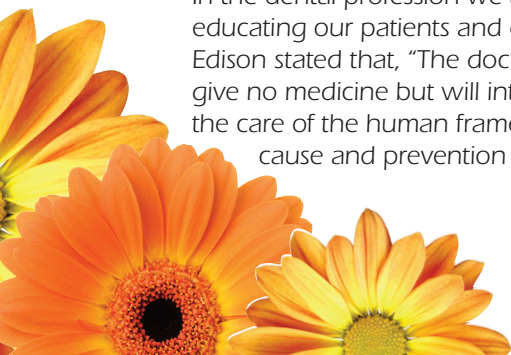


Think about the last time you didn't get a lot of sleep. How did you feel? Sleep is necessary for our brain to relax, recharge, and repair. Our hearts, lungs, tissues, and muscles also need time to revitalize, reenergize and restore.

Studies show that rats die within 14 days without sleep. It is necessary for life. When humans don't get sleep we have drops in performance, lack of concentration, reduced reaction time, lapses in memory, mood swings, health issues, and so much more.

Of course as dentists we should first rule out OSA in our patients. Then we should suggest healthy ways our patients can increase the quality of their sleep. Let's go through a few of these.

Get prepared for sleep. Take a bath or shower to lower your core temperature. Read or listen to soft music. Dim the lights. Limit your screen time on computers, phones, and TV's before you head to bed as well.



Limit your food and drink. Don't go to bed too hungry or stuffed. Limit your fluids, for your bladders sake. Be careful as to your consumption of nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol as these can hamper your sleep cycle.

Decrease the electromagnetic fields around your bedroom. EMFS decrease melatonin production. Melatonin is a natural hormone that is produced by our pineal glands. It allows the body to relax and triggers sleepiness at night. So check out your nightstand. If you have a computer, iPad, cell phone, and chargers on it...you need to unplug!

Lastly, get comfortable. Sleep in soft clothing and bedding. Your room should be between 68-72 degrees. Earplugs, eye masks, room darkening shades, and background noise can also be helpful. Look into using NuCalm and getting on a sleep protocol.

S - Simplify



Confucius has said, "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated." Simplifying our lives is a challenge with the busy schedules we keep. To make this easy, concentrate on 4 things that can improve your life.

First identify what is important and eliminate all else. Make a list of your top 4-5 important things. What's most important to you? What do you value most? My top four commitments are making time for Exercise, Eating clean, Relationship deposits (partner, children, parents, friends), and Learning something new daily. Simplifying starts with these priorities, as you are trying to make room in your life so you have more time for these things.

Next we should evaluate our communication time. Our lives these days are filled with a vast flow of communications: email, IM, cell phones, paper mail, Skype, Twitter, forums, and more. It can take up your whole day if you let it. Instead, put a limit on your communications: only do email at certain times of the day, for a certain number of minutes. Only do IM once a day, for a limited amount of time. Limit phone calls to certain times too. Set a schedule and stick to it. If you really are a computer lover, you might want to check out

RescueTime.com. It tracks how much time you are loafing around and how much time is actual work time.

Learn to say "No" more often when it infringes on what is important to you. Often we overcommit ourselves and then miss out on things that are truly important. Learn to say "No" by saying I "don't" rather than I "can't," to help empower your resolve. "I don't" is experienced as a choice, so it feels empowering. It's an affirmation of your determination and willpower. "I can't" is not a choice. It's a restriction; it's being imposed upon you. So thinking "I can't" undermines your sense of power and personal agency. For example if you are committed to exercising and someone asks you to do something during your scheduled workout time, instead of saying "I can't go," say "I don't miss workouts."

Finally to simply your life, start organizing the clutter around you. This might feel like a monumental task, so start small. Purge a shelf in your closet or garage. Take everything off and decide what stays or goes. Be merciless and make quick decisions. When you are finished, make sure you celebrate your accomplishment!

E - Exercise

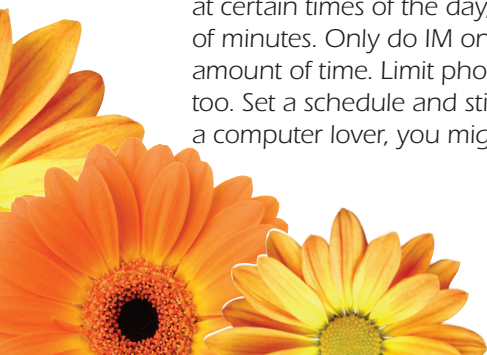
You should exercise for one main reason...LONGEVITY.



About 1/3 of the elderly population over the age of 65 falls each year, and the risk of falls increases proportionately with age. At 80 years old, over half of seniors fall annually.

Those who fall are two to three times more likely to fall again. Falls are the leading cause of death due to injury among the elderly. Falls account for 25% of all hospital admissions, and 40% of all nursing home admissions. 40% of those admitted do not return to independent living: 25% die within a year. That statistic is shocking!

As we age we need to stay MOBILE. Studies show that moderate physical activity improves the independence and mobility of older adults. Focus on walking and lower body strengthening exercises to increase your mobility and strength for life.



Other reasons to exercise through our life times are: Appearance, Increased Energy, Increased Endurance and Strength, Happiness, Less Disease, Longevity, Deeper Sleep, Stress Relief, Weight Loss, and Recreation.

N - Nutrition



Moderation in all things is a way to approach good nutrition. Fad diets are out. Knowing what foods can adversely affect you takes a more concerted effort. Fat was once the target of disdain but now gluten has come to the forefront as a cause of many side effects from irritable bowel, colitis, to just constipation and bloating. That isn't what this section is about, since most of us know about a healthy diet.

A visit to the doctor used to include: "stick out your tongue and say ah." With doctor's time being cut shorter and shorter, this isn't done with the same regularity. In the dentist chair we have the opportunity to see subtle changes and deficiencies in the body by inspecting our patient's tongue (and our own!). The tongue body should be light pale pink with flexible movement. The tongue coating should be thin and white.

For example, a red, inflamed tongue might indicate a lack of certain nutrients, especially B vitamins. B vitamins are needed for energy metabolism, cell growth, and the proper functioning of the nervous system. A pale tongue could mean that the blood is lacking in hemoglobin, the iron-containing protein found in red blood cells. Iron, found in red meat, shell fish, nuts and apricots, is essential for the formation of red blood cells and necessary for energy and vitality. If a tongue changes color or texture, a Chinese herbalist or naturopath may use tongue diagnosis to detect vitamin deficiencies, poor circulation, high cholesterol, allergies, or digestive problems. Tongue's body color helps determine chronic conditions, and the coating helps determine acute conditions.

A thick, yellow coating might indicate that there is too much "heat" in the body and to eat more

cooling foods such as cucumber, watermelon, and green tea. The thicker the coating the more digestive issues are present, and digestive enzymes might be recommended. A thick, white coating might indicate that there is too much "cold" in the body and increasing warming foods such as garlic, ginger, and cinnamon would be indicated.

The tongue appearance can indicate that there has been a long-term period of deficiency in the body similar to a period of drought over a landmass. The ground will become extremely dry and start to crack. The tongue will look the same way. The deeper the fissures or cracks correlates to a more chronic condition that the tongue and body are experiencing. The body might be undergoing dehydration and long-term adrenal stress. Typically, the tongue is swollen in this state and the pressure causes cracking. Once the underlying issues have been addressed, the fissuring should begin to diminish. The treatment for this can include Vitamin A and digestive qi-energy tonics such as Ginseng, Astragalus, and Aswagandha.

C - Create a Happy Place



Definition: the mental or physical place you go to when you want to avoid the unpleasant or uncomfortable.

Everyone's happy place is different, and usually consists of the things that make them joyous. The one thing it isn't is anything or anyone that is negative.

You need time to refresh to be your healthiest... mentally and physically. Be selfish and allow some 'you ' time. This could be doing things you enjoy such as hobbies, sports, 'vegging out' and doing nothing, learning something new, going on vacation, having a massage, hanging out with friends, heading to your lake house or personal retreat, playing an instrument, gardening, walking the dog, and just about any activity you can think of that puts you in a happy, harmonious, state of mind.

Whatever your Happy Place is...you need to spend time there. As Leo Tolstoy says, "If you want to be happy, BE." Happiness is an inside job.





“If you want to be happy, BE.”

Leo Tolstoy

E - Empower



Em·pow·er means to give (someone) the authority or power to do something.

The essence to good health really is about empowering ourselves to live a healthier life. No one can do this for us but US! “Life has no remote, so get up and change it yourself.” Tony

Robbins has an excellent method to keep us on track with our lifestyle goals since this is about effecting a lifestyle change. RPM stands for Results/Purpose/Massive Action Plan.

Result:

What do you really want? What’s the outcome you are after? What’s the specific measurable result? The more precise your result is, the stronger it is. For example, there is a difference between “I want to lose weight” and “I want to lose 20 pounds.”

Purpose:

What is your purpose? What are your reasons? The emotional quality of purpose will make what you

will do sustainable and powerful. For example, if you want to lose weight –why? Because you will feel healthier, because you will fit better in your clothes, because you want to turn heads, because you want to lower your blood pressure, because... Your reason is what will keep you going and not give up.

Massive action plan:

What do you need to do to achieve your result? What is your massive action plan? This has to be not just one or two things, but brainstorm a bunch of ideas. For example, get a gym membership, make a grocery list of healthy foods, go through the pantry and throw out all the high processed, high sugar foods, set the alarm an hour earlier to go to the gym.

Hopefully we have EMPOWERED you to improve some areas in your life that need a little tweeking. When you reach the ESSENCE of health... you will truly know what it is to be yourself.