

What is true Health ?

During the 1950's health was defined as " Soundness of body; condition in which its functions are duly discharged " (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary)

Yet over the years health practitioners have come to realise that a person is not really healthy, just because he or she is not suffering from a diagnosed illness or when the physical body is sound. That is when the term Holistic approach was introduced; meaning that the body consists of the physical body, a mind and a soul and that these three are interconnected. This implies that the one can affect the others in a positive or negative way. We'll look at a few examples later on.

The definition of health was then expanded to" The state of being bodily and mentally vigorous and free from disease" (Collins Concise English Dictionary)

The term "holistic", however, is not new. It comes from the Greek term, "holos" that means whole. We find reference to this wholeness even in expressions like " sound in body and mind" and "keeping body and soul together".

How does one part affect the other ? Take for example, stress, which is situated in one's mind. Under stressful conditions, one person may develop a stomach ulcer, the other high blood pressure, the other eczema and so the list goes on. It has been mentioned in many publications that stress-related conditions, sometimes called psychosomatic illnesses, are the biggest cause for doctor's appointments. Physical conditions like long-term illnesses and even obesity which affects a person's self-image can be major causes of depression. Yet on the other hand depression may be the cause of the overeating. All these negative effects influence one's spiritual well-being over a period of time.

Treatment should then also have a holistic approach. Take for example the person who suffers from a stomach ulcer due to stress. He can take medication to cure the ulcer, but in a few weeks the ulcer will return if the cause of it, his high stress levels are not managed. We live in an environment loaded with stress due to pressure at work, at home and even on the sporting field. One needs to find the reason for your stress and then learn to manage it. (More on the topic of stress in future articles). The person who overeats due to depression will find it hard to stick to a diet if her depression is not also addressed.

At Healthy Ways we are aiming to help people achieve true health, meaning physical, emotional and spiritual health through consultation and updating you on the most recent findings.

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