

## **OUR INDIVIDUAL AND GLOBAL HEALTH:**

### **AS YE SOW SO SHALL YE REAP**

Past actions testify that I thought I could sustain myself with whatever I wanted to eat and drink, lead a sedentary life, stress myself and assume that my body could handle the self-inflicted abuse. I passed the buck to my body to deal with the toxic stuff I consumed, the physically inactive life I lead, and my stressful thinking. And if my body became overwhelmed with the daily intake of lifeless food, drink and thinking, I could hand-ball my failing health to the medical fraternity; who would prescribe all manner of remedies to fix me. If their pills and potions failed I could have the diseased parts replaced, zapped with radiation, sliced away or chemically poisoned. No worries mate!

After 64 years of that quality of thinking and behaviour, what followed?

- Overweight
- Hypertension (high blood pressure).
- Hypothyroidism (an underactive thyroid).
- Continuous diarrhoea.
- Various perennial skin ailments.
- High cholesterol.
- Exhausted much of the time... old and worn out.
- Cancer of the prostate

Like other 'she'll be right mate' Aussie males, I didn't take care of myself. Didn't grasp at a gut level (bulging bigger by the day) that I only had one body and it needed good care and maintenance. For which I was responsible and accountable. And more fool me, unlike

most males, stored in the recesses of my memory was accumulated knowledge from earlier study on achieving and maintaining optimal health. This I ignored. Instead I put the burden on my body to keep me alive in the face of gross neglect and mistreatment. A bad mistake!

In the case of the cancer, the specialist presented the news, warning me that there was limited time to have the tumours cut, drugged, or burnt away – or they would metastasize. “When this happens,” she said, “you will die a slow painful death. “ I had already been told a few years earlier that I should take medication for my high blood pressure and my rapidly failing thyroid and would need to do so for the rest of my life. I had a range of creams for my skin conditions that gave temporary relief. And I also had blood tests, endoscopies and colonoscopies all without finding out why I had had ‘the runs’ for the preceding 5 years.

The cancer news jolted me to my core. I was scared. What to do? Having failed to take care of my health, was I now about to pass the buck once more? Was I going to leave it all to the medical, pharmaceutical or complementary medicine fraternities? Or was I going to meet the challenge of healing my body, of which the cancer and assorted other conditions were but symptoms of neglect and abuse... an irresponsible lifestyle? Had I really discovered the essence of responsibility back in '92?

Apparently not quite! But from the deepest recess I remembered that the body, given the right conditions – optimal nutrition, appropriate exercise and a peaceful state of mind, will heal from any malady. I remembered books read in my twenties, and recalled a remarkable personal healing experience in my early thirties. Those readings and the natural healing event demonstrated the following: a 100% raw vegan organic diet, coupled with significantly reduced eating done in concert with fresh juicing, an energetic outdoor exercise program and a contented state of mind would, if practiced with daily discipline, lead to healing.

The decision was made; the path forward clear. For me, shifting the burden of responsibility for my health to others was no longer a viable option. I had faith that, as it

had become sick with mistreatment, my body would heal, given time and cared for in the way I knew how to. If in doubt I would dig deeper.

Two years six months later aged 67, following a natural healing regime, my body responded in the following way:

- Weight reduced from 83.7kg to 61.7kg: a drop of 22kg.
- Blood pressure down from 135/85 to 110/60
- Thyroid Function: TSH down from 27.90 to 3.12 (Healthy Range 0.40 – 4.00).
- Normal bowel movements.
- Skin conditions healed.
- Cholesterol reduced from 5.3 to 3.8 (Healthy Range <5.5\*).
- LDL Cholesterol down from 3.8 to 2.6 (Healthy Range <3.5).
- Coronary Risk Ratio has come down from 5.3 to 3.8 (Healthy Range <5.0).
- Feeling stronger, healthier and more energised than I can recall at any point in my life.
- The test results show steady improvement.

Passing the buck for our health has become so commonplace that it looks as if it is the right thing to do. The norm! Taking next to zero responsibility for our health is part of our culture. It's frightening!

We smoke; we use drugs. We consume alcohol, caffeine and sugar-laden drinks. Some of us, maybe to salve our conscience, take make-believe health drinks; pasteurised, chemicalised, devitalised fruit and veggie juices and a mind-boggling array of other containerised anti-health drinks. We eat make believe health foods; made with dead ingredients. We exist on food that has had the nutrition and nourishment cooked or

processed to near-extinction. We grow increasingly inactive, fat and unhealthy or emaciated and sickly. We line up in our hundreds of thousands each day across the nation at medical practices. Given pharmaceuticals for fixing our self-induced failing health; we merely join the club of lifetime users. Others, disillusioned at the malfunction of modern medicine – and its clear inability to stem our nation's declining health, turn to the naturopath or homeopath, hoping that extracts of this or that tree, bark, root, fruit, shrub, vegetable or herb will do the trick. Or that this vitamin, mineral, enzyme, pro-biotic, anti-oxidant or protein supplement will remedy what Mother Nature has the inherent capacity to provide if only we bypass the dead-food dealers and go direct to the manufacturer; Mother Nature.

Unfortunately most of us (me included til recently) refuse to take the natural road that leads to vibrant, sustainable health. Instead, we live on a lifeless food diet. Some, trying to do the right thing, lace their diet with limited value vitamin and mineral supplements; trusting that these will compensate for a lousy diet. Millions, from babies to old timers, are ending up with serious disease. Hundreds of thousands are hospitalised and more of our aged are living a wretched, drug extended but physically and mentally infirmed old age (many in soul destroying care). From cradle to grave, we pass the burden of responsibility to an expanding legion of, dare I say it, make-believe health providers (mainstream or alternative) to fix the symptoms of an unhealthy lifestyle rather than eating, drinking and living naturally.

Becoming responsible for living very simply and naturally has healed 7 of my 8 ailments. Given time, and continuing to provide my body with nature's natural medicine: organic nutrition, exercise and healthy thinking, the cancer will go the same way as my other lifestyle-induced conditions. Passing the buck for my health has stopped.

### **ON A LARGER SCALE – THE HEALTH OF OUR PLANET**

Having seen how we shift the burden of responsibility for our health, let's look briefly at how we do the same thing with the wellbeing of our common home... the planet.

Polluting the air; degrading the arable soils; acidifying, contaminating and scraping the life from our ocean floors; heating up the atmosphere; killing the lungs of our planet – the forests; and embracing the potential destruction of our food chain by genetically modifying it – that is just a few headline-grabbing examples of our irresponsibility. And, for a second time, I acknowledge that there are others, infinitely more qualified, who will vehemently disagree with my views. But having listened carefully to both sides of the debate on each preceding point for over 50 years, I am unwilling to sit on the fence and in effect, absolve myself of responsibility. I don't believe we can risk inflicting further potential harm that may take thousands if not millions of years to heal, while in the process we destroy the animal kingdom (a kingdom in which we are clearly the destructive species).

Closer to home, however, is our misuse of water. For two hundred years Australians have refused to be accountable for undervaluing, wasting, poisoning and in other ways destroying our most precious resource.

In my home town, Perth, we argue the toss over how to deal with water restrictions. We ask “Is it best to use desalination; build more dams; pipe overland, ship it 2000 kilometres from our North; or plumb the depths of additional ancient and finite aquifers?” More of us should ask: “How do we conserve what we have?” Most cures, as with our personal health, address the symptoms, not the cause – our chronically irresponsible use and abuse. Each solution passes the buck. We waste water everywhere we use it. In agriculture, industry, at all levels of government and in our homes and gardens. At present we still don't have a real water shortage! What we have is a massive waste of water in every nook and cranny of our community.

Rather than take personal responsibility for educating ourselves and stopping the waste, aren't we (individually and collectively) shifting the burden of responsibility to our elected government to solve the problem? It seems so to me. Our government in turns shifts it back to the taxpayer, us: to pay for what many see as unsustainable solutions. On this merry-go-round, arm in arm with the government, we form a pact which ultimately shifts the problem onto the environment in one way or another. We build another ecologically

damaging dam. Better still; we salt up our local sea while at the same time using massive amounts of CO2 emitting energy to run a desalination plant. We drain another ancient aquifer that takes a thousand years to refill, or we construct an environmentally harmful canal from the north to the south. Passing the buck, the thoughtless way of living, is never better illustrated than when we talk about life-sustaining water.

Few of us see to the heart of the problem: our lack of careful and prudent use of this most precious resource, and pricing it in accordance with its economic and environmental cost. Instead, we blame 'climate change' or the lack of infrastructure planning by successive Governments. Most of us habitually look outside ourselves to solve the problem. Incongruous as it sounds, we ignore the fact that we live on the planet's driest continent! We need to respond to that, understand that, and respect that. We need to stop (as with our personal health) treating symptoms (in this case our need to please ourselves how we use water) and address the cause, our lack of adequate conservation.

As with all problems, sustainable solutions are available. There are highly skilled men and women who know exactly what needs to be changed within agriculture, industry, government and our own homes and gardens to conserve this most precious resource. We need to listen to them and to act. The buck can stop with you and me at work or at home for wasting water and for the other ways in which we are destroying our planet. What do you say? Will we, as custodians of our environment, embrace responsibility before it is too late? Being 100% responsible for our personal contribution would be a grand start!

By John A Wood