

Latest fad or medical alternative

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What is holistic medicine?

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a five-part series on the holistic approach to treatment and care of the body, mind, and spirit. The information was gleaned from an all-day symposium held Saturday at the Chabot College Valley Campus.

By DAVE MARTIN

EVERMORE — Holistic medicine. Is it the latest great American fad? Or is it, as some say, an improved way to handle the medical problems of a highly stressed, extremely rushed society?

The old family doctor will tell you he has been

practicing holistic medicine all along. He has treated the illness with medication, the emotional problems with consultation. While letting you know when you are overweight he has been telling you what you should or shouldn't be eating.

Nearly 500 people turned out at Chabot's Valley Campus Saturday to find out what it is that they are reading and hearing about, when the college held its annual health symposium. This year's topic, "Holistic Health."

And according to Dr. Deane Shapiro, what these people have been hearing about is a mix of ancient oriental meditation arts; and the precision of modern-day medicine.

Shapiro is Dean of Behavioral Science at

Stanford University's School of Medicine. He has written a book on holistic health, giving it a title using two words reflecting the old and the new — "Precision Nirvana."

In his early college years, Shapiro went to the Orient to study its ancient arts. When he returned to this country, he "was angered at the fragmentation in medicine. No one looked at the whole picture."

As the years passed, Shapiro said he realized the best way was to mix the methods of moving into yourself, preached in the Orient, with the modern practice of becoming aware of your environment in order to deal with it.

"You must be able to close your eyes to look

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into yourself before you can open them to deal with life," he said.

What the patient must learn to deal with, is a society which is filled with stress. "None of us can live a day without stress," Shapiro told the audience. "The question is, how you react to it."

He said you must learn how to "create" the life proper life-style in which to handle the stress.

Holistic medicine aims are to put the "care" back into medicine, moving away from merely the mechanical practices of prescribing medication to treat the disease.

"We are trying to put the patient back into medicine," Shapiro said. "For too long, patients have been passive, looking toward their doctor for the answer."

And most of all, holistic medicine includes the treatment of the whole body, using proper food, diet, exercise, relaxation and how to change the impact those forces you can't change, has on your body.

Everyday life is filled with crisis. "Life is full of choices, but you never get any," Shapiro said.

Holistic thought tells you to take on the "responsibility" of not "going with the crowd, giving yourself the choices and taking them."

And once you accept the responsibility to develop the choices, holistic medicine tells you to explore the choices, through meditation and self-hypnosis, biofeedback, nutrition and activity.

Once the alternatives have been chosen, you must make a commitment to learn the techniques. And you learn the techniques through education.

"C — crisis, R — responsibility, E — exploration, A — alternatives, T — techniques and E — education, the building blocks to help you CREATE a better life-style," Shapiro said.

And while you are learning to use the building blocks, Shapiro said it is necessary to "go easy on yourself. Handle yourself the same way you would handle someone else you're trying to teach."



DR. DEANE SHAPIRO — MEDICINE NEEDS TO LOOK AT THE WHOLE PICTURE