

INTRODUCTION

This book is all about hope. From ancient healing therapies to the latest American innovations you have more options for great health today than ever before. Complementary and alternative therapies, known as CAM, are about more than just improving your health. These therapies are about helping you rediscover the joy, the wonder and the beauty of living.

They say you can't unbreak the mirror, meaning the damage is done. In the world of healthcare the analogy would be mainstream medicine treating the symptoms of the broken mirror with drugs to try and glue it back together. To UnBreak Your Health™ means discovering the real source of the problem and treating all of it. What happened that caused you to drop the mirror in the first place? Perhaps the aches and pains that caused you to stumble are caused from your body being out of alignment in some way so it's a body issue. Maybe an emotional issue or traumatic life experience is seeking resolution by expressing itself through the body, so it could be a mind issue. Or your life force energy could be blocked in some way resulting in a physical problem so it could be a spirit or energy issue.

In this guide you'll also discover incredible new devices like a top-secret Russian military technology used in their space program (read about *SKENAR*). You'll read about Dr. Bjorn Nordenstrom's discovery of an energy circulation system in the human body (see *Energy Medicine*), remarkably similar to ancient Chinese concepts (see *Traditional Chinese Medicine*). Doctors in the U.S. have said this could be the most important medical discovery in 350 years. You'll find information new and old and begin to see patterns and concepts between therapies that are consistent through thousands of years and across civilizations around the world.

The most basic concept is that you are the sum of your Mind-Body-Spirit so a problem in one area can mean problems in all areas. Holistic (or whole-istic) therapies can be so effective because they address all of you. You're about to discover how complementary and alternative therapies work to prevent problems or correct them as soon as possible to prevent them from growing into serious issues.

It seems like everybody knows somebody who's experienced success, sometimes miraculous success, with some kind of complementary or alternative therapy once you start talking with friends and family about these options. While working on this book I've been amazed at the stories from friends and yet we all seem to talk about CAM in whispers, as if it's something normal people didn't discuss in public. I hope this book brings complementary and alternative therapies out of the shadows and into the light of day so more people can discover a healthier, happier new life.

The majority of Americans (62%) have already used some form of complementary and alternative therapy during the previous 12 months according to a 2002 federal government report. This data is from the National Health Interview Survey conducted by the U. S. Department of Health & Human Services, the Center for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics. The growth of CAM in the past twenty years has been phenomenal, especially considering that the majority of the billions of dollars spent have been by individuals, not the government or insurance companies.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the explosive growth and popularity of complementary and alternative therapies is the appreciation of a person as much more than just a number on a form. Every person is a unique individual composed of mind, body and spirit (or life-force energy). All facets must be healthy and balanced for wellness and personal growth. A PBS-TV special in 2006 showed doctors talking about their hope for the trend in medicine to go back to treating patients as whole beings. Many of them wondered how Western medicine could have ever gotten so far off track to ignore the mind and spiritual components of every patient in the first place.

Complementary and alternative therapies also focus on individualized treatments, rather than assembly-line medicine. Every person and their health problems are unique, usually resulting from a combination of factors. These therapies tend to look at the whole person for the source of the problem, not just the symptoms that bring them in the door.

In this era of entitlement too many people have come to believe they are owed good health and this has led to a passive national attitude towards health. When we get sick we expect the doctor to give us a pill, a shot or perform some surgery to fix us right up so we can continue living without having to make any changes. One of the major themes of complementary and alternative therapies is personal responsibility. Who better to take care of *your* body than YOU? These complementary and alternative therapies offer new and old ways for better health but you, the person reading this book, will have to care enough about living to take personal responsibility for your life.

Another difference between standard medicine and CAM today is a focus on wellness and the ingredients for health. We need proper diet, exercise and a way to release the stress of the day among other things. You've probably already heard these recommendations from medical doctors. These aren't new ideas; in fact they're very old. Hundreds of years ago Johnathan Swift, author of Gulliver's Travels, said that "The best doctors in the world are Doctor Diet, Doctor Quiet and Doctor Merryman." Today we usually take better care of our cars and our yards than we do our most precious gift, our own health.

America has neglected complementary and alternative therapies in favor of scientific Western medicine for over 100 years. While this profit-driven orientation has produced some outstanding developments, much has also been sacrificed. Today the newest equipment is confirming that we are all *whole beings* of mind, body and spirit, often raising more questions than providing answers. The explosion of research in neuroscience is changing the meaning of the expression "It's all in your head" because technology is showing how the mind is related to and controls the body. We're moving quickly from simply correlation of the mind-body connection to discovering the actual mechanisms of interaction.

Changes have already slowly begun to take place in mainstream medicine. The National Institutes of Health conducted a survey in 2005 reporting nearly 27% of those hospitals responding were offering one or more CAM therapies. The most popular CAM in-patient therapy being offered was massage with a 37% response rate. Music and Art Therapy was the second most common in-patient therapy offered at 26%.

You've probably heard many opinions about the Placebo Effect and I'll take this opportunity to add another right up front. I believe the Placebo Effect is simply the body's natural ability to heal itself of everything from the common cold to cancer. The process has no side effects, is non-toxic, and is completely natural and safe. It may, in fact, be the benchmark for the body's natural healing ability. Trying to rush it beyond its natural design may be causing problems.

Because so many of these complementary and alternative therapies are based on a completely different paradigm (energy) they operate on different principles than the standard chemical model of the human body. This means they can't be studied using the same methodology as current research. They also function as whole systems and cannot be examined piece by piece. Using existing research models for CAM is simply like trying to put a square peg in a round hole. Much like quantum physics, the very act of observation influences the results. Even the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy understood this concept. The 2002 report said "Research is needed to pursue answers to questions posed by CAM that lie outside the conventional medical paradigm."

Everything in this book will work for someone, but nothing in this book will work for everyone. The same is true with mainstream medicine. Some pills help people while the same medication may be ineffective or even harmful to someone else. There is a wide variety and quality of medical doctors and of the practitioners of these healing arts. Whether it's a medical doctor or an alternative practitioner you should always research their qualifications and training and then enter into any relationship with an attitude of Buyer Beware. Remember, you are in charge of your health! Just as it's always been recommended to seek out second opinions for diagnosis by a medical doctor, practicing the same approach would be beneficial when working with complementary or alternative therapies too.

Every type of CAM will not be found in this book. Quite frankly, some are practiced by only a few people while others are being created so quickly that it's almost impossible to keep track. Being human it's possible my research has missed some valuable therapies too. Some of the therapies listed are FDA approved but because they're still ignored by most doctors they're still considered outside of the "norm". A list of resources is included at the end of this book for continuing research in new developments and contrary opinions.

What started out as a quest to improve my own Baby Boomer health has resulted in this collection of information and opportunities. Like so many people, conventional medicine ran out of ideas to help me, so I had to start looking for new options, fortunately I've found them. Researching this book has been an enjoyable and enlightening adventure.

This reference guide to complementary and alternative therapies is the result of research and interpretation of each modality, or type of process. In many cases there are a variety of opinions, so please remember this is simply ONE opinion. With the steady stream of innovation happening today this volume is not intended as a finished work but simply a starting place for your quest for better health and a better life.