

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

With an autoimmune disease, the medical model folks tend to concentrate on the symptoms, or on the particular presentation of the disease they've said you have. There's good reason for this, of course. For example, the vast majority of people who are diagnosed with progressive MS end up bedridden and incapable of controlling any of their muscle structure before they actually die of complications from the disease. Each aspect of this degeneration is a symptom of a form of multiple sclerosis.

MS is one example, but every disease comes complete with its own set of symptom types which may go one way, or perhaps another, but whichever way the symptoms go they will show a strong tendency (very strong) to stay within a particular framework which gives the disease its name.

What most doctors appear to ignore about autoimmune disease is that the disease is not its symptoms – symptoms merely signal the disease's existence and its state. And symptoms are useful. They're trying to communicate something. They're telling us – screaming at us, in truth – that there's something wrong with the immune system. So... why not heal the immune system? Why fuss with symptoms when the immune system is the actual problem?

I went through a period of anger with doctors for these seeming limitations; why don't they SEE this. If they do see it, why don't they ACT on it? But, never mind. I still find doctors scary, but I'm no longer so negative about them. I know now that doctors know important things – essential things about our bodies, things I'd never even be able to imagine thinking of.

On top of which, there's not much – in fact there's nothing a doctor can do to heal your immune system. Healing your immune system is up to you, 100%. What you've got to do to heal is pretty simple stuff, nothing hard to understand about it. Not to say that healing the immune system is a piece of cake. Doing what's required can be... a challenge.

Imagine your immune system is a large barrel. According to Bruce Lipton, former cellular biologist at Stanford, 95% of us come into the world with good DNA. So, for 95 out of 100 people, the barrel that's our immune system is in good working order from the moment we're conceived.

From the moment we're born, we're putting stuff into that barrel (but this process begins in utero). For a few people, the barrel is never filled. But for some of us, the barrel is filled to the point that the stuff in there runs over the top. When the barrel that's our immune system begins to overflow, disease establishes itself. The form of disease you're inclined to develop is partially determined by your genetic makeup, which will indicate where you're likely to be weak. Weaknesses as well as strengths – and improvements! – tend to be passed on from one generation to another.*

So, when you develop an autoimmune disease, your immune system needs attention and healing. Obviously!

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

There are several ways to do this. You can reduce the amount of crap in the barrel, siphoning off and reducing what's in there. You can increase the size of the barrel, growing the barrel bigger. Or you can do both.

Putting a stop to the flood is the only way to heal your immune system. Once you've established the process of healing the immune system, you also stop autoimmune disease. Once this process is firmly in place – which will take time – you can also begin working to reverse damage done before the disease was stopped.

It's perfectly possible to do all this. But there aren't any pills for it. A person's life and lifestyle are what's filled the barrel past its capacity in the first place, thus causing it to overflow. Healing this begins with a long, ruthless look at your assumptions, at your goals and desires, at your life and how you live it. Remember Einstein's definition of insanity: the expectation of change when all actions remain the same. Healing autoimmune disease is a major change that will require significant life change to bring about.

The best thing about all this is that in healing your immune system and healing disease, you also heal your life. And that's actually... magnificent.

*With many thanks to Doris Rapp, M.D. who developed this phenomenally useful barrel analogy and explained it so clearly in her book, 'Is This Your Child: Discovering and Treating Unrecognized Allergies in Children and Adults'.