

**The Seamless Garment:  
A Holistic Life  
Jude LaClaire, Ph.D.**

*“This we know: All things are connected like the blood that unites us.  
We did not weave the web of life,  
We are merely a strand in it.  
Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.”*

**Brother Eagle, Sister Sky: A Message from Chief Seattle** (Dial Books, 1991)

The threads of this seamless garment connect living beings with each other and with the environment and the body with the mind. One who lives a holistic life understands and applies this philosophy in daily thoughts, speech and actions. Thinking or acting as if these threads are not woven together can cause harm to ourselves, others and the environment.

We can see examples of this in the damage done by the use of herbicides and pesticides. Many birth defects, organic brain disorders, immune system deficiencies and diseases have been traced to the use of these chemicals. The intention was good. The resulting destruction is a high price to pay.

Industrialization moved forward, giving this country world leadership economically and politically. However, looking at the number of hazardous waste sites monitored by EPA in this country, one can conclude that progress and its benefit come at a very great cost.

On an individual level, we can see a parallel. Take, for example, the prolific use of antibiotics. This was the ‘miracle cure.’ One got antibiotics for almost everything, including viruses and other illnesses that really weren’t helped by them. The result is that we have produced antibodies that are resistant to the antibiotics. Taking a full-spectrum antibiotic can cure you of one illness and make you more vulnerable to many more as it kills the good bacteria along with the unhealthy bacteria. Physicians and health practitioners give remedies for the ‘part’ of the body they work with, not relating the ‘cure’ to the other parts of the human being.

Candace Pert in *Molecules of Emotion: Why You Feel, the Way You Feel*, tells us about the ‘interconnectedness of all systems of the organism.’ Some people think of the connection of body and mind as ‘mind over matter.’ “Mind doesn’t dominate body, it *becomes* body - body and mind are one. I see the process of communication we have demonstrated, the flow of information throughout the whole organism, as evidence that the body is the actual outward manifestation, in physical space, of the mind...And when we explore the role that emotions play in the body, as expressed through the neuropeptide molecules, it will become clear how emotions can be seen as a key to the understanding of disease.” (p. 187)

She further explains this concept, “We know that the immune system, like the central nervous system, has memory and the capacity to learn. Thus, it could be said that intelligence is located not only in the brain but in the cells that are distributed throughout the body, and that the traditional separation of mental processes, including emotions, from the body is no longer valid.” (p. 187)

Whether you are experiencing discomfort, disease and pain or are working towards prevention of illness, you may be wondering how you can use a holistic approach. Remember that everything is connected. Find the interventions that appeal to you and that may help the condition by getting to the cause. This may take a synergistic integration of different approaches.

You, and the holistic practitioners you partner with in this quest, need to avoid the pitfall of the 'one size fits all' theory. Complementary medicine practitioners can fall into the same hole that allopathic (mainstream medicine) practitioners do. It is easy to get so focused on one's specialty that he/she forgets other possible interventions that could facilitate healing and wellness.

Remember that you are the leader of the holistic team. You know your body-mind, your environment and your history. Find people who will work with you and communicate with other practitioners you choose. Your team may include holistic as well as allopathic practitioners. It should also include your support system. Coordinate the interventions you choose. Avoid confusing or overloading your system by doing too many things at once.

Always ask questions, get information and trust your body wisdom and intuition! Once you begin something, follow through with consistency until you see results. It takes time and patience to heal in a holistic way. It is not the quick fix approach. In the end you will be in charge of your life, healthier and living more pro-actively. You will be living the maxim; "*All things are connected like the blood that unites us.*"

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