

Dr. Beverly Jensen



We're only 100 years away from complete reliance on herbal medicine. My mother-in-law told the story of her father (circa late 1920s) chopping the palm of his hand with an axe, her mother going into the garden and picking comfrey leaves, wrapping his hand up with the leaves, tying it tightly, and it was healed in a few days. Today that injury would be a rush to the Hospital ER, stitches, antibiotics, and a bill for a \$\$\$\$. And, in this case, the latter would be a better choice!

In a study a few years ago of who is practicing natural medicines in the US, it was found to be primarily women who came from a family using traditional remedies. I grew up in such a family. In 1953, my mother gave her third birth in a hospital, and the doctors in Colorado strapped her flat on her back for the birth, against her protests. There were complications, and I don't remember my mother ever seeing an MD again.

When the family was in a serious auto accident in 1958, the doctors stitched us up, but we all saw the chiropractor to put us back together again. Many years later, when she was diagnosed with stomach cancer, and the MDs told her to "get her affairs in order," she went to see the herbalist Hannah Kruger in Boulder. Hannah may be America's best known herbalist; her patients were lined up down the street from her herbal shop on Pearl Street in the 1970s, so many customers that the Colorado Medical Society tried to close her down, claiming she was "practicing medicine." Boulderites roared back, and Hannah's shop stayed open.

Learning Started Early

So I grew up with *Prevention* magazine, and in my 20s I was buying books on natural healing that filled many shelves. I wasn't actually reading or using these books—yet, but they seemed like a good resource to have. In my mid-20s I was living in central Missouri, and during the winters I would have a cold every month that lasted for 10 days, and I was so ill I was bed-ridden for 4-5 days. Finally, Linus Pauling discovered the usefulness of Vitamin C. I immediately began taking larger doses, and I reduced the number of colds to 2 per season, lasting 4-5 days and never requiring bed rest.

In 1978, I moved to Seattle, and after a few years sinus infections began reoccurring. I was excited when they came out with Sudafed but it had no effect on me. Once I had such a fierce

sinus infection I finally turned to that shelf of books on natural healing that I'd barely read. I found a recipe to overcome congestion:

"Steep 5 cloves of freshest garlic in two cups of boiling water for 20 minutes."

I drank this concoction and instantly cleared the sinuses—it was a miracle!

These books became my medical guide books. But I had many more lessons to learn.

At the end of '80s stress brought on a dis-ease which had no name, no diagnosis, no treatment, and surely no drug in the world of the AMA. I coped with what felt like flu symptoms, off and on, for 18 months before women friends told me about homeopathy. The disease, now known as an autoimmune disease, became labeled IBS or Irritable Bowel Syndrome. I saw the homeopathic physicians, and after a 2-hour consultation, I was prescribed a remedy. One dose, and I never had another symptom for six years—until, while working in China, Tiger Balm, a camphor product, was used for a shoulder rub. Those of you who use homeopathy probably know that camphor cancels constitutional homeopathic treatments. So I took another dose of the remedy.

Discovery of a New Medical System

After discovering this whole new medical system, I bought a guide to using homeopathy at home and a kit of remedies. The pediatricians never saw my three daughters again. When I packed them up and moved to Egypt in 1993, homeopathy was how we managed all the usual injuries and illnesses of children—banged knees, sunburn, insect bites, adolescent emotions, and digestive issues. Years later when they left for college, they each went off with that same homeopathy guidebook and a kit of remedies.

But at the end of each decade, I developed the bleeding-edge disease, always the affliction of women, so we were told "it's all in your head." At the end of the '90s, and again brought on by stress--environmental and emotional—I crashed with another unknown ailment. This would eventually become labeled "Fibromyalgia." This time constitutional homeopathic remedies didn't resolve the issue. I searched for answers, saw every type of MD by specialty (I had a European healthcare insurance at the time, which was a saving grace). The MDs were like blind-men trying to describe an elephant; they only saw the area they were specialized in, and nobody had answers.

TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine)

Two years passed. I worked as a consultant, telecommuting, so I could keep the schedule I needed. Finally, a woman friend reminded me of Traditional Chinese Medicine. I had vaguely known of TCM when growing up in Okinawa. I found a local TCM physician in Virginia and took with me to the appointment a page-long list of symptoms I had experienced since becoming

ill. Then Dr. Yan asked me if I had also experienced others that I had forgotten about—*foggy brain* is one of the symptoms!

At last I had found a physician who understood how all the body's systems work together. When I left his office, I sat in my auto and cried from relief and joy. He gave me a prescription of raw herbs to pick up in the Asian neighborhood. I cooked them at home, and in seven days I was dramatically improved. In three weeks I was able to return to Prague for a project I managed and then catch a train to Italy to join the family for a holiday. Full recovery from fibro took a few months, but Dr. Yan became the family's primary physician.

The project in the Czech Republic was to train physicians and public health directors in use of the Internet for health education and political advocacy. It was 1999. After my years of experiences in these alternate realms of health, I decided I would promote and educate American women in the world's choices of healthcare using the Internet.

The site, WomensMedicineBowl.com, was launched in 2003. And now I am **working as a certified health coach with women (and men)** who want to transform their health. We can work together one-on-one or in small groups in an online course soon to be launched. It is my goal to help *you* to discover how to best renew your health using natural medical treatments with no contraindications — and that *won't harm you*.