

Human-Earth
Expressions on
Integrative Health
and Our Environment:

Mapping Caves

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By
Shelley R. Noble-Letort

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To

M. A. P.

Our Children

Our Children's Children

Philosophy, for one who understands,
points out, and not in just one place, he said,
how Nature follows—as she takes her course—
the Divine Intellect and Divine Art;
and if you read your Physics carefully,
not many pages from the start, you'll see
that when it can, your art would follow nature,
just as a pupil imitates his master;
so that your art is almost God's grandchild.
From these two, art and nature, it is fitting,
if you recall how Genesis begins,
for men to make their way, to gain their living...

•

Dante Alighieri
The Divine Comedy
Inferno, Canto XI

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THIS BOOK EVOLVED over an unexpectedly extended period of time involving many people, for whom I have deep gratitude.

First and foremost are my husband, Claus Letort, and my editor, Rebecca Gladders, whose prevailing support and patience deserve the grandest appreciation.

Before becoming a manuscript for publication, this book's first iteration was a doctoral dissertation. The man and woman who were literal "keys" to my doctorate are Dr. Richard J. Nagy and Dr. Murphy I. Lewis. My first doctoral committee was led by the formidable Professors Emeriti Dr. Christine Downing and Dr. David L. Miller who insisted that its form should be based in memoir and since the work insisted otherwise, it was Professor Emerita Dr. Ginette Paris who championed the work. Although the guidance from Drs. Downing and Miller were equally invaluable, there was an invisible resonance below the surface of the work that Dr. Paris and I share, which her words from her *Wisdom of the Psyche: Depth Psychology After Neuroscience* help to ascertain:

The strongest sentiment, the one that dominates, is the felt sense that all human beings are related, the ones we love and the ones we barely know [...] the living and the departed [...] all are part of the invisible rhizome that binds us to the same root, that sends the current from one pole to the other, that inverts pain and joy, love and death, presence and absence, pain and deliverance, the living and the dead [...]. (Paris, 10)

And before a word was written, there were certain heroines of mine who inspired me to step forward, dig deeper into the research, reach for that root and write down my thoughts, share and complete.

One of those heroines is Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen, who I met at her 2005 *The Healer's Art* workshop: *The Healing Power of Story*. She taught me that listening to a story is as important as telling a story and once you tell a story, it is imperative to understand that this story no longer is yours. Truth is not numerical, it is numen; it is all process. The human story based on humanity is about learning to trust the process. There are no strangers in a story. Stories heal people when the listener and the teller are able to use

these stories in their full consciousness. Henceforth, stories help people to retrieve their power.

The other heroine is Dr. Jane Goodall, who I met when we just so happened to be sitting together in front of a grand estate's wood-burning fireplace. Our encounter was the evening before one of the greatest sundowner fires (gusts up to 85 mph) that ever swept through Santa Barbara, which destroyed countless homes including the home in which we sat. This fire would become the precursor to the many ever-more devastating climate change induced fires to come. At this fireplace, the only thing that remained standing when I returned weeks later, Dr. Goodall regarded me with her all-knowing eyes as if she were looking directly into me; a look that silenced all the noise around us. She spoke to me, sharing with me one of her many stories that she shares with numerous people around the world; a story about hope for the renewal of destroyed ecosystems and endangered species. It was a storyteller's long-telling of a story, to which you want to keep listening. This one wove a story of her life around the importance of birds and ended with her already well-told tale about the last two black robins of New Zealand and a man who would not give up. This time, she crafted her tale for me, as all good storytellers do for whomever is present, and simply ended it for me saying, "Yes, the last male bird and the last female bird needed the man, but only a female bird can give birth to an egg and it only takes one egg to remake the world. Take care of your egg, do not lose hope."

After receiving my doctorate, my two children and I moved into a newly married life with my husband and his 3 children in Copenhagen. Within 3 months, I was invited to speak at a venue in affiliation to Copenhagen University Hospital, Rigshospitalet. To my surprise, being the unknown that I was, I delivered my lecture to a standing-room only of mostly medical professionals from all departments of the hospital. These professionals had many questions—not so much for me and my work, but—about Integrative Medicine (IM). And so, because of this revelatory day and the numerous calling cards I received, I was set upon a course that helped me to form a board of directors that founded Nordic Integrative Medicine (NIM). From there, we hosted the 8th European Congress for Integrative Medicine (ECIM), which was supposed to be called a Nordic Summit because it was the first ECIM to be held in the Nordics. Due to the fact that researchers from over 30 countries representing 5 continents were scheduled to attend, it very quickly became a Global Summit that strove to explore evermore diverse global perspectives on the evidence-base for integrative health therapies, health research, and healthcare workforce for patients. In addition, we were able to give platforms to lesser known subjects such as Music Therapy

championed by Professor Lars Ole Bonde and Ethnopharmacology championed by Professor Merlin L. Willcox. The future of Integrative Medicine and Health (IMH) in Denmark is indebted to the numerous people who were involved in this ground-breaking endeavor.

Prior to this congress and henceforth, my gratitude extends to Dr. Ervin Laszlo, who was one of the first in Europe to lift me up from the unknown through his gracious invitation to share my thoughts on Integrative Medicine and Health at the University of Milan and the X. World Cultural Forum in China as well as publish in the Routledge *World Futures: The Journal of General Evolution*. Through the years, it has been my fortune to speak at numerous venues worldwide, which provided me podia to present my thoughts and better craft my words for multiple cultures.

And then, my fate distilled itself into a potent tincture. Within the same week that I received this book's contract from Cambridge Scholars and my second grant to produce *Finding Integrative Health* from The Weil Foundation, I received my breathtaking diagnosis of cancer. Of course, it was more than a shock, yet it was less of a surprise. Both of my grandparents having suffered through multiple cancer diagnoses (bladder, colon, kidney, ovarian, and rectum) had succumbed to its ultimate end. My grandmother died at my current too-young-to-die age, and yes, I would be the lucky unlucky one to receive genetic testing that would confirm my inheritance of our family's ancestral genetic mutation. My rare cancerous tumor, aided far too long by this mutation, was able to gradually grow undetected by my T-killer cells and ferociously feast undeterred upon my body.

Long story short is that I changed my genetic fate through extensive research, which ultimately led me to obtain the most technologically advanced, less invasive cancer therapy treatment—pencil beam proton therapy. Unlike conventional photon radiation, this particular proton treatment is programmed to enter the body and deposit only a small dose of radiation to the surrounding tissue and bones along the way to the targeted tumor and then stopping any radiation-damaging dosage beyond the tumor. While I refused the conventional chemoradiation treatment offered to me, I could not find any university hospitals in Europe that were able to provide me with any form of proton cancer therapy whatsoever. Consequently, I returned home to California where I found the brilliant Dr. Iain MacEwan, who said yes! when everyone else in Europe and America said no. It is Dr. MacEwan to whom I ultimately owe my life and the absolute reason I have been able to publish this book and continue my work with all my vigor. His offering of proton therapy delivered with precision by his team full of

expertise and love at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) affiliate California Protons Cancer Treatment Center was an experience that cannot be expressed sufficiently with words. In addition, I am indebted to UCSD oncologist Professor Lawrence Leichman, who with compassion, also said yes! to accepting me as his very last patient of his career and giving me the perfect gift for my body, a personalized pill-form version of chemotherapy based on his ground-breaking research. Finally, it was my oncologists at UCSD Moores Cancer Center who were the first to refer to me as an “exceptional patient” and subsequently it was my Danish gastrointestinal specialist Dr. Peter Svenningsen who first deemed me “cured” (officially confirmed later by a F-18-FDG inj. PET/CT, the same exact machine that confirmed my initial diagnosis) at my one year control when he found not a trace of neither the tumor, nor any radiation damage whatsoever. Since Dr. Svenningsen was also the first to see my tumor in all its bloody ferociousness, he suddenly could not believe his eyes. He said that if he had not already seen my tumor, he would not believe that it ever existed. It was also amazing that I did not lose my hair, nor did I have any chemoradiation sores anywhere on my body, and I did not need a blood transfusion, not even pharmaceuticals for my pain. My immune system remained resilient via regenerative cell nutrition and a strict adherence to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) food safety guidelines for people with cancer, and my pain remained endurable via support from a team of integrative health practitioners. There is just too much to be said, so I continue to put pencil to paper for a new book for publication. It is my hope that one day, evidence-based integrative therapies will be fully integrated into conventional patient care and exceptional stories about healing cancer will no longer be considered exceptions, but Our Common Rule.

There are so many known and unknown who literally took me under their care, into their arms and in their prayers: The rocks of my foundation are my mother and my sister who stayed and steadied the course with me; my husband who before my diagnosis claimed he could not cry and then, cried nearly a continual flood of tears for months that could fill a grand canyon, his heart burst wide-open; Penny Ann Keller Herring, whom I have known since we were 7 years old, remained dedicated as she maintained a Sunday Prayer group in support of my well-being that lasted from the first Sunday after my diagnosis until the last Sunday after the completion of my treatment; my lovely New Zealander human rights-lawyer-writer friend Janine Ford who gently and meticulously went line-by-line with me over this book’s contract all the while holding me in her empathic presence; Pamela Reiss, whom I have known since our 20s in Tokyo, who just happened to be on a pilgrimage in India when I called her with the news and

without delay proceeded to pray for me in every temple she came across. And, upon her return home to New York, spent hours and hours of her time, nearly all the nights and days I was alone during my treatment, calling me to wish me good night and good morning, and being the pilgrim that she is, helped me to process the psychological and mythological depths of my past and at the time ever-critical present experiences; my dear-heart son Luca and his sweet girlfriend Sara and her mother Praphaporn who took me to the Watpa Buddhist temple in Copenhagen to meet the radiant monk Somsak. Somsak told me to remember, especially when I find myself in pain, that “the Buddha has the power to stop the cycle of suffering. With loving kindness, breathe inward, heal and conserve your energy. Remember that You are the Buddha.” And so, I tried, and I think maybe I did, because I was able to refuse all opioids that were offered and boy, there were many. I barely escaped them. From the depths of my resolve and the support of many integrative therapies offered to me, I was able to transcend the immense pain that I lost track of after it moved way beyond the scale of 1-10. This pain was ominous as it increased ever so slowly during my 28-day treatment, especially when it amplified exponentially over the long days that lasted for weeks after my treatment ended. I made it through with the help of science and support, and throughout it all, Somsak’s presence prevailed.

Once I was approved for treatment at UCSD, so many persons championed themselves around me. Colleen and Terry Kinninger, who opened their beautiful home and offered me a peaceful refuge to be a monk to myself atop their hill overlooking all the splendorous views of Rancho Santa Fe, the rolling in and out of fog from the Pacific Ocean, and the hawks who kept watch over me; the spirits of my near-present ancestors who once inhabited this part of California—Norma Ida Noble Norton (my maternal grandmother who died of cancer at my age), John Pershing Norton (my maternal grandfather who died from the surgery that attempted to remove the cancer from his body) and Uncle Ron Mayuiers—all seemed to be holding a vigil on my behalf; my cousin Ronnette Mayuiers, who was there for me when my heart burst wide-open the day before the start of my treatment and proceed to call me weekly, talking with me for hours while helping me to understand; my step-son August Letort, who unwittingly bloomed into a chivalrous gentleman that drove me around when I could not drive and carried what I could not carry up the very, very steep hill that I lived upon, especially the numerous heavy cases of pH 9.5+ alkaline water bottles that were the absolute key to preventing me from ever developing one chemotherapy-induced sore in my mouth or anywhere on my skin; my surfer-star goddaughter niece Makena Burke who joined my daughter for one of her weekly 3 hours drives to be with me on the weekends and surf

with Dr. MacEwan; my devoted friends Kathleen Ousley and Rupa Shree Appa-Pind who came to visit and spent days and nights with me lifting my spirit; Lucinda Carole Keller, who just happened to be walking the St. Francis of Assisi trail during my whole treatment and prayed for me in every church she came across sending me daily gifts of her photographs that portrayed profound beauty; UCSD Moores Cancer Center hospital assistant Tina Marie Cordona, a stranger who, when I first arrived for my one and only chemotherapy infusion full of tears and at my most alone, took me into her arms and embraced me, erasing forever the fear, which had been the psychosomatic cause for my high blood pressure that I had been experiencing ever since my diagnosis; and everyone who cared for me at UCSD Center for Integrative Medicine, my team—Integrative Primary Care Physician and Medical Acupuncturist Dr. Sozanski, MD; *Eating Through Cancer Treatment* Director of Healing Foods Program Christine Zoumas, MS RD; Certified Oncology Massage Specialist Rob MacDonald LMT; and Tai Chi specialist Dan Halpern. These devoted practitioners met with me weekly including California Protons' Clinical Dietitian Kathryn Holly Retz, RD. Furthermore, I am not sure in what state my body would be now without the formidable Reiki Master Dr. Danilychev MD, who together with four of her students literally brought me back to life during those post-treatment days and weeks when the journey toward recovery begins. It is true, the story about a village.

Genetics is truly not destiny because knowledge + technology = power. I am testimony to this. Thank you to UCSD Health's Family Cancer Genetics Program genetic counselor Diana de Rosa, who invited me to participate in *CancerNext-Expanded* DNA testing as well as unprecedented mRNA testing, which at the time was only offered at 10 National Cancer Institute—Comprehensive Cancer Centers (NCI-CCC) in the United States. Months later, COVID-19 pandemic arrived and a year later, the first mRNA vaccine was born. Somehow, I like to think that my mRNA genetic information is doing something to help conquer our pandemic, maybe even cancer. Whether this is true or not, I will never know. I encourage everyone to contribute themselves to DNA/mRNA databases. As we know now more than ever before, mRNA is the key to a future when epidemics, such as cancer, and viral pandemics no longer pose existential threats to life lived on Our Earth.

Lastly and never the least, more-like a never-ending thread that weaves through me, my ever-so brave and constant daughter Michaela, whom in her radiant presence healed me through and through. This book is dedicated to her father, whose tragic accident in 1996, three weeks after her birth, was a

shock to my life that literally started this book by setting my course squarely in the direction toward *making my way and gaining my living* in the field of integrative medicine; to her and her brother, Our Children, who are forever twined more than they know by the same birthdate 5 years apart; and to their children who likewise represent Our Children's Children, also my dedication to this book. We are only as good as the next generation. It is my hope that this book may help just a little bit in making Our Environment better for the generations to come.

I would like to leave this body of work in one of those mythic tranquil valleys described in the poetic words written by Henry Miller, published in 1947 by Editions Poetic London:

Retracing the curve of life one sees that it is not the broad, circuitous arc that one imagines to himself, that it is neither an arrow shot toward death nor the parabolic kiss of the infinite, not yet the noble symphony of biology; rather a succession of shocks, a seismographic record of oscillations, of peaks and dips between which lie the broad, tranquil valleys.

The literal unearthed etched-into-stone in runic testament—*Love conquers all; let us too yield to love*—provides a simple-in-all-its-complexity clue on how to proceed. This proverbial saying, adopted by the Vikings from the eternal writings of the ancient Roman poet Virgil, was letterpress-printed on paper in runic for my wedding to my husband. Now, this testament has become our well-proven proclamation that will continue to yield us upright along the proceeding curve of Our Life.

FOREWORD

DR MERLIN L. WILLCOX

ACADEMIC CLINICAL LECTURER, SCHOOL OF PRIMARY CARE,
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NOW MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, it is imperative that humanity learns to value its profound dependence on the natural world as we witness its destruction at an unprecedented pace. It is widely recognised that we depend on our environment to supply our basic needs for food, water and natural resources. The importance of biodiversity is increasingly recognised as we continue to find new medicines from plants, although many species are becoming extinct before we even discover them. However, our bonds with the earth go even further. Many studies now prove the importance of green spaces for mental well-being. This book helps to deepen our understanding of the spiritual connections between human wellness and nature—extending the proverb of “mens sana in corpore sano” to “a healthy mind in a healthy environment”. Not only is nature necessary for preserving our sanity, but it can also help to heal us when we are ill. *MAPPING CAVES* takes this discussion to a new level. As a primary care physician and medical researcher, I see how our world is now dominated by evidence-based medicine and cost-effectiveness studies, which are of course essential when deciding between different modern medicines and expensive treatments. In parallel, patients are increasingly interested in integrative healthcare, which combines the advantages of conventional and complementary approaches. Not only is there a growing body of evidence demonstrating that many complementary therapies can be effective for treating certain conditions; these therapies often take a more “holistic” view of the patient, rather than focusing on a single organ or condition. This extends the understanding of our interdependence with nature; a consideration that involves deep philosophical principles. Shelley Noble-

Letort offers fresh insights into how nature can help us to heal by seeing disease in a new way and having a more positive frame of mind.

This is a truly interdisciplinary book, integrating perspectives from medicine, psychology, history, philosophy, anthropology and mythology - not only Greek and Roman but multicultural mythologies found in Native American and African, Hindu and Buddhist, Judeo-Christian and Islam, Prehistory and Modern stories. Many health professionals regard myths as obstacles to be overcome and countered, when giving correct information about prevention and treatment of disease. This book counterbalances this view, with examples of how traditional myths—and patient’s “personal” myths—can help us to understand different perspectives. Everyone who reads it will find their horizons are broadened and will gain a multifaceted understanding of our interconnectedness with the natural world.

INTRODUCTION

A LOST ART AND SCIENCE OF MEDICINE, which may have begun evolving out of the cave more than 10,000 years ago, is resurfacing and reforming into a new map of medicine that is transforming contemporary healthcare. This book unearths and transfigures human-earth expressions of healing through the exploration of metaphorical and symbolic images of caves revealed as recurrent symbols for mental states and physical environments. These “caves of healing” are introduced as the caves of the human body—caverns of heart and brain, and the caves of the earth body—caverns within, below and above the earth, which expand across cultures ancient and modern, shamanic and alchemical, initiatory and technological, intuitive and inventive, and imaginal and scientific.

A mythological map is unfolded for navigating the relationship between the mind and the body, and healthcare and our environment, which invite a deeper, more integrative dialogue into much-needed philosophical, ethical and political discussions.

Common sense dictates that health is a personal, national and global resource that affects all sectors of society. There seems to be an embedded call to change the mind-set of the scientific and medical communities from reactive and dogmatic to proactive and preventative. Furthermore, there appears to be a plea for a more open and integrative dialogue between interdisciplinary resources and supporting systems on how to advance and integrate progressive qualitative methods into standardized quantitative research for the delivery of primary healthcare.

The idea that the force of health is a force of Nature that becomes a fulcrum for healing is clarified as a possibility for a “new medicine for the 21st century” called Integrative Health, which advances not only ancient and modern technologies, but also education, policy, research and clinical care by promoting the empowerment of personal responsibility, prevention of disease, continuity of care, and compassionate engagement between patients and healthcare practitioners. This *new medicine* facilitates a balanced circular ecosystem between illness and wellness, patients and healers, community and society, human and earth that revives and promotes the role of consciousness.

Patients, in partnership with a team of medical doctors and complementary healthcare practitioners, are finding the tools to help them restore their health and create a flourishing life. The key to their finding is found through their courage to delve deeper into their personal story and health history; an invitation to excavate the mythic caverns beneath their illness in order to find the roots of their dis-ease that may provide an understanding of both their psyche and the somatic connections between the multi-relational processes of healing one's self and the implications for humanity and earth itself.

It is proposed that when our ancestors evolved out of the cave they transfigured, by way of their inner world imagination, their sacred underworld cave sanctuaries into sacred outer world shrines, pyramids, and temples that ultimately evolved into cathedrals and modern hospitals. Many generations believed that by situating one's self and community in sacred cave-like environments—caverns, temples, cathedrals—a “spirit of place” could be ascertained “in a center” where “the patient” may be seen, known and healed.

PROLOGUE

HOPE FOR HEALING AT THE INTERSECTION OF MYTH

HEART AND MIND, PSYCHE AND SOMA have distanced themselves from one another causing a threat to interconnected holistic ecosystems. The human body and what one could call "the earth body" continue to be dissected into parts, disconnected and compartmentalized into clinical specializations that are debated by categorically separated political committees and governing ministries. Be that as it may, at some point in each of our lives we may come to understand the following truths as self-evident: What seems lost may be found, what seems broken may be repaired and, we are connected—in more ways than we may have realized. For me, the most compelling question: Is anything ever truly lost or is it merely *sub-rosa*, hiding profoundly protected held secretly by self, culture and society awaiting to be recovered? In this time of seemingly unrelenting stories of brokenness and chaos on the world stage of politics, civil and humanitarian rights, and my particular focus, healthcare and the environment, where does one look for answers or, at the least, hope?

What is the Meaning of Hope?

ACCORDING TO THE PHYSICIAN Jerome Groopman, Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, "people often confuse hope with optimism. Hope is different. Hope is clear-eyed. It sees all the reality that you face, all the obstacles, all the problems, all the potential for failure. But through that, it sees as well, a possible path to a better future. It's not guaranteed, but it's possible." In other words, "hope is realistic because it sees medicine for what it is, as an uncertain art" and healing means that the patient is made whole again, emerging from the experience of illness having been restored as a person (Blummer and Meyer, 98-99). He is adamant that when physicians stop cutting themselves off from their patients' emotions, medicine becomes an art, not just science (Blummer and Meyer, 99). Furthermore, Groopman states that there is "a biology of hope" and it has a

powerful effect on the body (Blummer and Meyer, 99), therefore central in the experience of illness and in the path to healing. On the flipside, “if you assume that there is no hope,” states theoretic linguist Noam Chomsky on the basis of Pascal’s wager, “you guarantee that there will be no hope. And if you assume that there is an instinct for freedom, that there are opportunities to change things, then there is a possibility that you can contribute to making a better world. That’s your choice” (Edgley, 26). Making this choice presages choosing a path of moral and ethical courage that we must map out not alone but together. Humility in collaboration and compassion in care are essential attributes necessitating the successful achievement for healing on a level ever more integrative.

A New Map for Medicine

THERE IS A NEW MAP RE-EMERGING, rooted in ancient traditions, which explore the integrative relationship of mind, body and Nature. Each author words it differently, for example, a pioneer in the field of integrative medicine, Marilyn Schlitz, CEO/President Emeritus and Senior Fellow at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) published a paper entitled “Toward a Noetic Model of Medicine” that takes into consideration integrative dialogues that originated in the 1980s. As a result, a new map was created that “includes the mapmaker, as both a product and a participant in that which [one] seeks to know and represent” (Schlitz 46). She and her co-authors, Harvard scholar Eugene Taylor founder of the Cambridge Institute of Psychology and Comparative Religions and Nola Lewis of IONS, view this as an “engaged epistemology” that has been developing since the time of William James in the late nineteenth century and it can be seen most clearly in “the formulation of an integral healing model, uniting the many dimensions of human experience” (Schlitz 46).

In America, late February 2009, this model congealed at the first National Summit on Integrative Medicine and the Health of the Public in Washington DC, sponsored by the Institute of Medicine in association with The Bravewell Collaborative at the National Academy of Sciences. In my opinion, having attended this historic event, this gathering of medical experts, politicians, healthcare practitioners and researchers, was the catalyst for the healthcare debate currently underway in not only the United States, but nearly worldwide. Ralph Snyderman, MD, then Chancellor Emeritus of Duke University, stated firmly in the delivery of his keynote address that the current health care system is far from integrated but rather fragmented and “ineffective in promoting prevention, continuity of care, and effective

engagement of the patient” (Snyderman 2009). Days earlier, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing called “Integrative Care: A Pathway to a Healthier Nation,” co-chaired by long-time advocate for integrative healthcare U.S. Senators Tom Harkin and Barbara Mikulski who together with a panel of medical experts identified five critical factors for healthcare reform:

- 1) The new system must focus on prevention and wellness and put the patient at the center of care.
- 2) Lifestyle-modification programs have been proven not only to improve people’s overall health and well-being but also to mitigate and sometimes completely heal chronic diseases.
- 3) Genetics is not destiny: Recent research shows that gene expression can be turned on or off by nutritional choices, levels of social support, and stress-reduction activities such as meditation and exercise.
- 4) All healthcare practitioners should be educated in the importance of compassionate care that addresses the biopsychosocial dimensions of health.
- 5) Evidence-based medicine—which emphasizes the need for research and testing that expand the evidence for integrative models of care—is the only acceptable standard.

It was understood that the function of integrative medicine is to provide the best possible healthcare for both doctor and patient, and to be a cornerstone of the urgently needed reconfiguration of the increasingly dysfunctional healthcare system. The panel of experts insisted that the integrative medicine of today will simply be the medicine of the new century. “The planet is the guild,” was the message from American physician Dean Ornish to the attendees at the National Summit. He asserted that patients are suffering and want to be seen and heard. Society is suffering and wants to be seen and heard. Earth is suffering and wants to be seen and heard. Ornish, who is the founder of the Preventative Medicine Research Institute, called forth a “union of guilds,” a unified “guild of healers” that is adamant about compassionate care and collaboration (Ornish 2009). Inspired by this concept of a guild, I spoke up at the end of the summit questioning the panel and attendees whether it is necessary to re-invent the wheel, rather could it be possible to learn from each other about what is working and not working on each side of the Atlantic Ocean. For the benefit of global health, I urged them to collectively recognize the fact that nothing less than a unified synergy of multiple, distinct yet complementary healing modalities would be needed in order to create a balanced system between illnesses and wellness, patients and healers, humans and earth.

One year later, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), was passed into law with a mandate to provide all U.S. Citizens with healthcare. Five years later, the U.S. Congress changed the name of the National Institute of Health's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine to the NIH National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH).

By 2015, the uninsured share of the American population nearly halved and the Institute of Medicine changed its name to the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) as part of a broader internal reorganization by the National Academy of Sciences to integrate research it conducts on matters of science, engineering and health. In the same year, I presided over 30 countries, 40 universities and 200 scientific presentations as the 8th President of the European Congress for Integrative Medicine (ECIM) 2015 Global Summit on Integrative Medicine and Healthcare in Copenhagen where President of NAM Dr. Victor Dzau delivered the keynote presentation on the future of global healthcare. As I summarized in the *Journal of Integrative Medicine*, our focus was on the exploration of the evidence-base for integrated and sustainable research, healthcare and workforce for patients. Our innovative and solution-driven platform offered physicians and healthcare practitioners, researchers and students, politicians and patients the opportunity to collectively exchange and discuss their research findings related to the field of integrative medicine and collectively work on the vision and science, economics and education for optimal healthcare.

IT IS CLEAR that there are individual health consequences to economic hardships that have fueled the addiction-related epidemics and global economic consequences to viral pandemics; meaning these consequences concentrically affect both human and earth ecosystems from the inside out and from the outside in. Pandemics provide immediate lessons on the power of concentric action; meaning that the action of one can exponentially affect the lives of many and the collective actions of many can have a powerful effect in saving a single precious life. Without health, all is nothing including the economy. Without science grounded in chemistry, biology and physics, all will fail including politics, ideology and economic markets. Already, genomic epidemiology has made an evolutionary leap in genetic surveillance on the raw fact that it was necessary for our survival. Genomic sequencers, first mapped out in 2002 by NIH National Human Genome Research Institute, are now evolving at a tremendous rate in accuracy, lower costs and greater speed. Exomes, or portions of genetic code, can now be read in less than 24 hours to detect viral mutations and even investigate the

most specific genes linked to higher risks of cancers, which brings profound promises in fields from personal health to cultural anthropology and environmental monitoring. For healthcare, this equates to a significant step closer to the realization of personalized medicines and integrative lifestyle plans, tailored to our genetic strengths and vulnerabilities. Pivoting toward scientific evidence-based investments in health-promoting environmentally-sustainable infrastructures to strengthen the global economy would progressively strengthen the health of whole-of-societies. Consensus must agree that the health of society is a matter of collective defense, therefore all parliamentary and congressional defense committees and national security councils must advocate strongly for comprehensive environmental and healthcare reforms that protect human rights and integrate into medical systems preventative and rehabilitative solutions for not only communicable diseases such as pandemic viruses but Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), addiction, trauma and chronic pain that are exponentially debilitating whole-communities of people. Scientists actively engage in the mapping of climate-change, diseases and viruses in order to find antidotes and treatments. Integrative evidence-based solutions must be included in this mapping. There are numerous NCCIH studies and scalable initiatives like NATO's HFM 195 Task Force: Integrative Medicine Interventions for Military Personnel, which could help societies build resilient infrastructures that reduce the risk of epidemics and prevent evermore devastating pandemics driven by human behavior.

Currently, the attention Integrative Health and Medicine places on understanding whole persons and assisting people with lifestyle change is being recognized as a strategy to address the epidemic of chronic diseases threatening healthcare systems worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) Europe Health 2020 Plan asks for “an integrated approach to health” that implements “whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches.” To this date there is an Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine and Health (ACIMH) with a membership of over 70 Academic Health Centers for Integrative Medicine as well as other national organizations worldwide, such as the European Congress for Integrative Medicine (ECIM) and the National Institute of Integrative Medicine (NIIM) in Australia, along with academic journals such as the *Journal of Integrative Medicine* (JIM), *European Journal of Integrative Medicine* (EJIM), *Advances in Integrative Medicine* (AIMED), *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*, and *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*.

Given the prominent issues and threats that national healthcare systems are facing globally, it would be prudent to consider not only the scientific

evidence for and against integrative medicine that includes conventional, complementary and traditional medicine, but the deeper meanings beneath the surface—*the caverns beneath the cave*—of what it is to be human in relation to living a healthy life amidst all of life on Earth.

Mapping the Mythic

ONE COULD SAY THAT THE “REAL WORLD” IS A MYTH, a place where each individual, feminine and masculine, walks the Earth with various degrees of sensitivity and discernment. Yet, time seems to feel more like it is running faster and faster. Some feel and respond more acutely than others. It has been proven that we are not limited by the five senses, but utilize electromagnetic, phototropic, ultrasonic, infrasonic, vibrational, muscular, gravitational, and proprioceptive ways of perceiving. Still, humans are not created sensorially equal. Rather, it’s a question of evolutionary necessity and development.

What will humans choose to develop? Will humans choose to employ their senses more acutely to know the earth and all its living beings more intimately, or will they create more barriers to block out the natural world; turning away, hands covering their ears, no longer able to see, hear, smell, taste, nor feel? Surely, it’s not a matter of “going back” but rather coming concentrically full circle together utilizing all parts of the brain, inviting in the diverse worlds within the one world thereby allowing us to circumspect the different parts of life that could result in remaking a human more whole.

How does a person change? There is an intimate reciprocity to the parts of a human being: As the brain receives impulses that the body transduces, the body may be allowed to sense; as the body senses what the mind processes, the mind may be allowed to intuit; and as the mind intuits what the spirit or soul is crying out for, the soul may be allowed to guide. Trusting the whole human being to function freely and retrieving parts lost like the sensorial is to embark on a journey to retrieve not only the instinctual lost but our Soul.

SCIENCE MUST EVOLVE beyond brain-mind and mind-body dualisms toward an integrative understanding of a unified *psychesoma* and, already many healthcare providers are reviving and promoting the role of consciousness in order to reintegrate the expression of “soul” back into medicine.

The great challenge of reviving and promoting the role of consciousness—the ability to be both inwardly and outwardly aware—is apprehending the

crisis of isolation and fragmentation. According to political and cultural commentator David Brooks, there is a need to rebind the fabric of a society that has been torn by selfishness, cynicism, distrust and autonomy. Brooks encourages newer generations to be active in this rebinding, suggesting that “at some point there will have to be a new vocabulary and a restored anthropology emphasizing love, friendship, faithfulness, solidarity, and neighborliness that pushes people toward connection rather than distrust” (Brooks 2016). In his opinion one of the tasks, for those who succeed the older generations currently seen on the world stage, is to restore what he calls a new or renewed idealism grounded in this kind of anthropology. The Greek philosopher Plato defined idealism (*ydea, ydeall*) as pertaining to the divine that is rooted in earlier Greek words such as *eidénai* to know, *ideîn* to see and *oída* I know. Pope Francis’ 2020 Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* delivers a passionate plea to all of humanity encompassing all beliefs emphasizing our collective need “to sink our roots deeper into the fertile soil and history of our native place [...] where we can work on a small scale, our own neighborhood, but with a larger perspective.” He gives us the model of a polyhedron, in which the value of each individual is respected underscoring his opinion that it is “truly noble to place our hope in the hidden power of the seeds of goodness we sow [...] Good politics combines love with hope and with confidence in the reserves of goodness present in human hearts [...] built upon respect for law and frank dialogue between individuals.” When divine philosophical values and goals are rebound and aligned with our personal, communal and political bodies, it is pragmatic to know *how* we want to respectfully exercise ourselves in getting to where we need to be and move our collective bodies into noble value-based foreseeable action.

AS A WAY OF SEEING THROUGH THE CHAOS, American physician Rachel Naomi Remen, Founder and Director of the Institute for the Study of Health and Illness (ISHI) and one of the early pioneers of integrative medicine in the United States, has been adamant that “a medical culture is often a clear mirror for the larger culture it serves” whose wounds can be most clearly seen in the limitations of its medicine. She evokes a proposition: “If you want to understand the strengths and limitations of a culture, look at its medical system. All of a culture’s strengths, dreams, illusions, limitations, and wounds will be clearly reflected in its medical system” (Remen 141). At present, it is the fragmented medical and environmental systems that are necessitating our interconnected attention for the pragmatic implementation of coordinated reconstructive solutions. Pope Francis insists that “what is needed is a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral and interdisciplinary approach to handling the

different aspects of [our] crisis” (Francis, 2020). Integrative Health is evoking new paradigms for healthcare that may change our collective thinking about what is true or possible in the ever evolving cultural and scientific continuum of medicine by supporting people of medicine both conventional and traditional; people healing people, people healing communities and lands and environments both within and around—catalyzing health that enables a flourishing life for our human species, our wild animal species and the wild, beautifully divine earth that we inhabit.

Human-Earth Expressions on Integrative Health and Our Environment: Mapping Caves introduces new perspectives into the approach to healthcare and the care of our environment with respect to cross-cultural philosophies on how the heart and mind, human and earth, feminine and masculine may contribute to the mythic understanding of the human-earth connections that exist in the complementary processes of healing both ourselves and the world around us.

PART ONE

LOST AND FOUND

