

A New Year and *a New You?*

By *Bobbie Barbrey, RPh, CCN*

What will you do to improve your health in 2018? How committed are you to taking a new approach that will produce long-term, lasting results? I have always believed in building a foundation for long-term health rather than simply seeking the quick fix. Has putting duct tape over the engine light ever fixed an engine problem? How about taking a supplement or a drug to suppress a symptom?

I am a pharmacist, a certified clinical nutritionist, and the owner of Medicap Pharmacy in North Raleigh. I work one-on-one with patients who want to improve their health, structuring my health plans around the functional medicine concept. This approach is designed to: restore cellular communication pathways so cells can talk to each other again; repair and heal the GI tract and adrenals; improve the health and function of the filters (the liver and kidneys); determine the causative factors contributing to health issues and develop a plan to resolve these; work on a deeper level of cellular repair; and, lastly, put a maintenance plan in place. That's a mouthful! Let me try to describe this process with an analogy by showing the journey with my patient, Hope. This will involve some imagination on your part and will paint a picture of how to approach a new way of achieving optimal health.

HOPE'S JOURNEY TO HEALTH

We will compare Hope's body to a house that she just bought that needs some repairs. Hope noticed the windows upstairs are broken and must be replaced; she is obsessed with the broken windows and wants them fixed right away. In Hope's health journey it was psoriasis that she wanted to address first. Both in her health journey and the house example the focus is on the external—what people can see. I listened carefully as I saw Hope's approach which was to fix whatever seems to be broken and everything will be fine.

Continuing with the house analogy, we walked inside the front door into the house to head upstairs. But wait. There was so much congestion in the rooms and hallways downstairs that there was no way to get upstairs or even see a clear path to the stairs!

"Your pathways are so congested, Hope, that there is no way someone in another room would be able to talk to you, much less find a path upstairs. We have to clear this congestion out first. It looks like it has been here for a long time. Look at the mold growing over there covering the foyer; there are bacteria that do not belong here, and there are leftovers from unhealthy meals throughout the house! Let's focus on clearing out this garbage first so you have the opportunity to live a healthy life in this house. As it is now, this house is rotting from the inside and will likely fall down in the near future without extensive repairs."

Can you see how this can also be true inside the body? Years of eating unhealthy diets had clogged her internal systems to the point where cellular

communication was impaired. The flow of nutrients in and waste products out could barely happen. The toxic environment had allowed unwanted organisms to move in and thrive.

Hope was overwhelmed but she got it: she started drinking more water, she began eating a healthier diet to reduce the toxic sludge in her body, she began to exercise to assist in cleansing her body, and made it a priority to get extra sleep because she knew it would make the work go much faster.

NEXT STEPS

It was exciting to begin to see the changes in her. But like most patients, she wanted to see progress right away. I reminded her: *"Hope, this beautiful home we call your body has been neglected for a long time. That is why it will take time. You walked in and saw the results of years of boarding and you know it will take time to clear it all out. And that only gets us to the stairs so we can think about getting upstairs to fix your broken windows! Keep up the good work though. I think I can see those lymphatics starting to open up and flow again. The toxic waste dumps are beginning to move some. Good work!"*

Hope made great progress getting her systems open and communicating again. She also was healthy enough that her liver and kidneys, which had been neglected for so long, were working efficiently again. In our home analogy the liver and kidneys would correspond to the air filters that need to be replaced several times a year. If they are never replaced they struggle to filter anything or even let air pass.

Once her body had a path to remove the toxins she even started to lose weight! Her adrenals and organs of elimination began working better for the first time in years. Hope was starting to see why we did things in the order we did. *"This functional medicine approach is beginning to make sense to me, Bobbie,"* she told me. I knew it would. It just takes patience and knowing where to start. I was excited for Hope.

Once the obvious toxic debris was cleared out we could get to the bottom of the stairs. *"Hope, we have a new opportunity facing us. Look at those stairs! (In her body this would relate to her organs, the communication between them, and the environment they are in.) They really need some work based on the stress I see. An assortment of pathogens had stressed the organs and compromised their integrity, their function. You don't want them in your body. We need the stairs—the organs—to be connected to function optimally. If we don't fix the stairs we will never get to the second floor to fix the broken windows."* Hope nodded; she understood.

"You wouldn't have been able to work on these health robbing bacteria, candida, mold and other toxins without doing the cleansing work first. You now have a beautiful flow about your body that allows us to do the deeper work. Our testing identified the specific pathogens to customize our plan of attack. Based on those test results, we will start with probiotics, targeted nutritional products and homeopathic remedies. Roll up your sleeves and let's get to work. This will take some time but these freeloaders need to go. Some have already left because of the initial work you did. The places where they were hiding and most comfortable are now under attack! You are moving them out. Good job. This can be the most time-consuming repair project in your body, but when you do this thoroughly you will be able to live in this home for years to come. Don't get impatient. Take time with this, Hope."



Pharmacist Bobbie Barbrey gives future pharmacy student Stephanie Tran a tour of Medicap Pharmacy's compounding center.

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SEEING RESULTS

After patiently following our plan and retesting to make sure that the pathogens were gone, Hope said, *"Can we finally go up the stairs to the second floor now and fix those broken windows? That was all I wanted to do in the first place and instead we have spent all our time cleaning up sludge, clearing out garbage, getting a clean flow from*

room to room. Then we did the hard work repairing the stairs, (eliminating pathogens in the body)."

Hope reflected on this statement and realized that she had become a participant in the path to wellness and it was working!

I invited Hope upstairs so she could now finish the repair of her home. She could hardly believe her eyes. What do you think she saw? The broken windows had repaired themselves. They were perfect. What seemed like a miracle is actually a function of our perfectly designed bodies. Give them what they need and they know what to do to heal and repair. The innate healing response is very powerful.

Hope learned that the "broken windows" were the symptoms that brought her to me originally: the psoriasis, sneezing, dry skin, constipation, low energy, and poor sleep. And she learned, too, that these "broken windows" were fixed by restoring the foundation for health in her body in the proper order so that she could live in her beautiful body—her home—for many years to come. And isn't that what we all want? As you read this, you are welcoming in 2018. Are you ready for your 'open' house?

RESTORING HEALTH—IN THE PROPER ORDER

As you can see, it is essential to take care of the foundation first, and to address issues that may not present on the surface in a sequential manner. All health arises from this strong foundation. This is what I have spent years studying and how I work with my patients. Give yourself the New Year's resolution of truly good health. Call today to schedule your appointment with me. **kkh**

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