

Where do I begin

Complementary and alternative medicine has come a long way. There are studies supporting the use of supplements, massage, acupuncture, homeopathy and most other alternative medicine modalities. With so much information, it's sometimes hard to prioritize what to do first.

In my experience, the first step toward enhancing health is to take an objective look at yourself. If you want to know what you believe about physical health, look at your body. Looking at my body, it is clear that I believe that exercise is not important to my health or that I don't deserve the time and energy investment exercise requires.

If you want to know what you believe about mental health, look at your thought patterns. I tend to think of all of the things I have to do rather than being present in my life. Sometimes, I am so far in my cerebral process that I miss turns while driving. Sometimes, I focus on the negative aspects of things rather than recognizing what works. I even at times have trouble sleeping because my monkey mind is running rampant.

If you want to know what you believe about emotional health, look at your emotional reactions. Do you artificially hype up your emotions with unnecessary drama? Are there issues from your past that evoke so much emotion they stop you from moving forward?

If you want to know what you believe about spiritual health, look at your sense of connectedness with spirit. Most spiritual disciplines have the aim of helping us recognize that we all are one. Do you feel separate from the rest of the world?

In allopathic medicine, one often hears the phrase, "first do no harm." Taking the time to objectively look at how you do harm to yourself in a physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual way can be very helpful.

After you have looked at yourself honestly and objectively, decide how you can transform your negative habits into active choices that enhance your enjoyment of life. I choose to swim with my dog and to play badminton and volleyball. Now, I am getting exercise without even thinking about it. I choose to experience Breema bodywork to improve my sense of being present in my life. I choose to replace my all night monkey mind with a journal. I write down my thoughts before going to bed so that my mind can relax. I choose to read books like *The Celestine Prophecy* that help me recognize my own emotional / coping dramas and thereby diffuse them. I choose to look at others and see our sameness.

Taking an honest look at yourself and then reducing the harm you create in your life is a huge first step toward achieving good health. No, it's not as dramatic as taking 35 supplements, going to 8 different health practitioners, and deciding to run marathon. It is, however, the step that you can use to get rid of your inertia and make goals that are achievable.

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