



"Western doctors are superb mechanics," says Spain. "For replacing bits and pieces and of course in acute situations they have made tremendous advances.

"But for chronic cases and long-term suffering, many people are coming to realize that Western allopathic procedures fall short and that there may be alternatives."

Alexander Yuan studied naturopathy, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine in Canada before returning to Hong Kong to set up a Western style naturopathic practice at the Optimum Health Centre.

"While it is true that Western medicine is very quick at relieving symptoms with the use of powerful, toxic drugs, it is incorrect to assume that such a procedure is necessarily making the person healthier," claims Yuan.

"Traditional herbal medicine is based on a very comprehensive system," he says. "It has a strong philosophical basis which has withstood the test of time. The immediate result may not be as drastic because it is a holistic approach, attempting to restore the proper balance to the body and it takes time."

With such divergent origins, beliefs and objectives, can the two approaches coexist and be used as complementary practices?

Canadian Jock McKeen was a Western-trained physician who had also studied traditional Chinese acupuncture in England when he first met Ben Wong 23 years ago.

Wong, at that time a young psychiatrist, was becoming interested in body and energy approaches and he and McKeen decided to combine their knowledge and interests.

They have been working together ever since.

"In our work we have used concepts from Oriental medicine, Western medicine, Western psychiatry, psychology and theology as well as humanistic perspectives in counselling," says McKeen.

"Western medicine is good for treatment of disease that has manifested, especially in acute situations where emergency procedure is required," he says. "Eastern medicine is excellent with chronic conditions and for lifestyle issues, to get at the circumstances where disease arises and to take action before disease manifests."

McKeen and Wong ceased private practice in 1975 and since that time have concentrated on group work at their idyllic "Haven By-the-Sea" personal and professional development centre on Gabriola Island, British Columbia.

The two have recently co-authored a book, "A Manual for Life", published by PD Seminars, 1992.

"At this stage in history," write McKeen and Wong, "The Chinese science is incorporating the Western scientific approach; the Western science has an opportunity at this juncture to learn much from the rich legacy of traditional Chinese science." ♦



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