

Monica Hershaft

By Dr. Tapan Maniar, M.D.

Monica Hershaft has taught me more about true health and self-healing than any medical school professor I've ever had.

She understands the mechanisms by which the body heals itself and integrates such fascinating concepts as whole food supplementation, applied kinesiology (muscle testing), customized homeopathy, cold laser scar therapy along with common sense avoidance of chemicals, heavy metals, and other immune suppressors.

She utilizes a Paleo style diet incorporating all organic, free-range animal protein with organic veggies and grains (sans wheat, dairy, soy, and sugar). She also teaches her clients how to survive and thrive in today's modern, toxic world of cell phones, computers, microwaves, and more, which affect our immune function.

As astonishing and strange as her techniques seemed at first, I came to admire the way she addressed nearly every aspect of health. She integrates Nutrition Response Testing along with everything she has learned and picked up in her years of practice as well as her many years of working to heal herself from her own illness. As I continue to educate myself on health and well-being, I often have "Aha!" moments where I suddenly understand how one of Monica's techniques or recommendations works.

The first time I went to Monica, she muscle tested me and asked if I had a mercury filling to which I confidently responded, "No." She furrowed her brow and muscle tested me again and then adamantly stated, "You are definitely testing for mercury! Come on... open your mouth!" She was right. I had a filling from 20 years prior in the back of my mouth that I had completely forgotten about and certainly never knew or cared that it contained mercury. But... how in the world could Monica tell this from testing the strength of my arm after placing an array of glass vials filled with various substances on me? I still don't completely understand, but these types of things happened so often that I stopped doubting her. At another visit, she showed me how my iPhone, when placed over my heart, interfered with my nervous system and weakened my muscles. At the time this felt like some kind of weird magician's trick, though she was able to reproduce the effect repeatedly. In retrospect, as I've come to investigate and learn more about "alternative" and holistic approaches to healing, it makes perfect sense that a phone known to emit electromagnetic waves would interfere with a heart and nervous system which runs on electromagnetic energy. That's what waves do, they interfere with one another. Monica, never shy to be direct, explained that just as the phone could impact nervous system function throughout my body, it could have long-term consequences on my sexual function if I leave it in my pants pocket all day long. Point taken.

In an early visit, Monica explained that she could resolve the allergies of every person that stuck to her program. I had developed allergies in my late 20s and early 30s, and they had reached a point where I was totally dependent on prescription allergy medication every day, without which I was miserable with congestion, watering itchy eyes, runny nose, sneezing etc.... A renowned allergist at my medical school put me immediately on strong allergy medication, which worked wonders as a band-aid solution. I was literally afraid not to carry the pills with me as I could barely get through the day without them. I told Monica I would be astonished if she could get me off my allergy pills. I had resigned myself to a life-time of pill dependency. God forbid my allergy medication stop working, because I would have had to consider offing myself. Over the course of a few months I tapered down my allergy meds but still had symptoms if I went too long without them. One day Monica pronounced that my allergies were healed, as long as I kept eating clean. I asked how she could know this, and she explained that I was testing fine and should not have allergies any longer. I decided to see how long I could go without the allergy medication and to my utter amazement, my allergies were indeed gone.

I could go on about the things Monica can identify and treat and the amazing yet simple techniques she uses to do so. Having read this far, one might imagine Monica to be an airy-fairy Los Angeles hippie, but she is a no-nonsense, albeit bubbly, straight-talking, scientific-minded, evidence-driven clinician. But, since mainstream medicine pre-judges anything outside of its comfort zone and the pharmaceutical industry cannot make profits on her simple, natural approach to health, her evidence cannot easily come in the form of large randomized trials.

Since she is not an MD, she can't easily publish case series on the astonishing healing that can happen for her clients. Monica's evidence is the simple daily observations of watching her clients heal and improve symptoms, labs, rashes, allergies, high blood pressure, mood, sleep, libido, etc....

I came to Monica with frequent tension headaches and within a few weeks they were gone. I came with high blood pressure, probably due to inflammation from a poor diet and lack of sleep, and within months it resolved. I came with low energy and sex drive issues and within months these improved.

Some of Monica's recommendations seemed insane—like putting oil on my scars to improve nerve conduction through those perturbed areas of skin. Some seemed reasonable, like not keeping my iPhone in my pocket near my reproductive organs and avoiding sugar, soy, dairy, wheat, and artificial sweeteners. Yet other recommendations made perfect sense, even to a conventionally minded physician who had previously poo-pooed alternative healing techniques.

For example, considering getting an air purifier, using natural cleaning products rather than chemical products which our bodies had never been exposed to until the past couple of generations, eating pasture-raised meats that don't need hormones to grow or antibiotics to remain alive. At a glance

Monica's sundry approaches to healing seem like a smorgasbord, but she uses them all in a systematic way that is scientific and methodical.

What didn't occur to me as a medical student but what is obvious to me now is that western medical doctors are not taught to understand healing. We've largely become pill pushers as a convenient way to get patients in and out of the office with a band-aid solution that temporarily hides deeper health issues. We're taught to use therapies and techniques that are commercially available and that generate revenue. Doctors will readily give you advice on diet and exercise, usually parroting the latest conventional wisdom, but they won't tell you that they barely spent a DAY of medical school critically understanding how nutrition can evoke healing and repair or cause imbalance and inflammation.

My hope for my profession in the coming years is that we'll have the open-mindedness to explore what we don't understand rather than condescend anything outside of the medical training paradigm. My goal in writing this foreword and supporting Monica is to nudge people, including my medical colleagues, to respect, study, and even integrate the holistic, natural techniques that Monica and others like her practice every day to achieve authentic, radiant health. -Tap Maniar, MD

I'm a physician trained at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and triple board certified in internal medicine, hematology, and oncology. In medical school, I received the Lillie M Erk Prize for Student who Best Cares for the Whole Patient, perhaps forecasting my eventual interest in holistic health and spirituality.

Since completing my training at Penn, I've worked in the field of cancer immunotherapy, harnessing the body's own defense against cancer. I recently led development of an immunotherapy for acute leukemia which had received breakthrough designation by the FDA and became one of the first immunotherapies ever approved in the world.

I continue to work on immunotherapies and plan to eventually return to practice using holistic health techniques and nudging my colleagues in the medical profession toward a more natural approach to health.