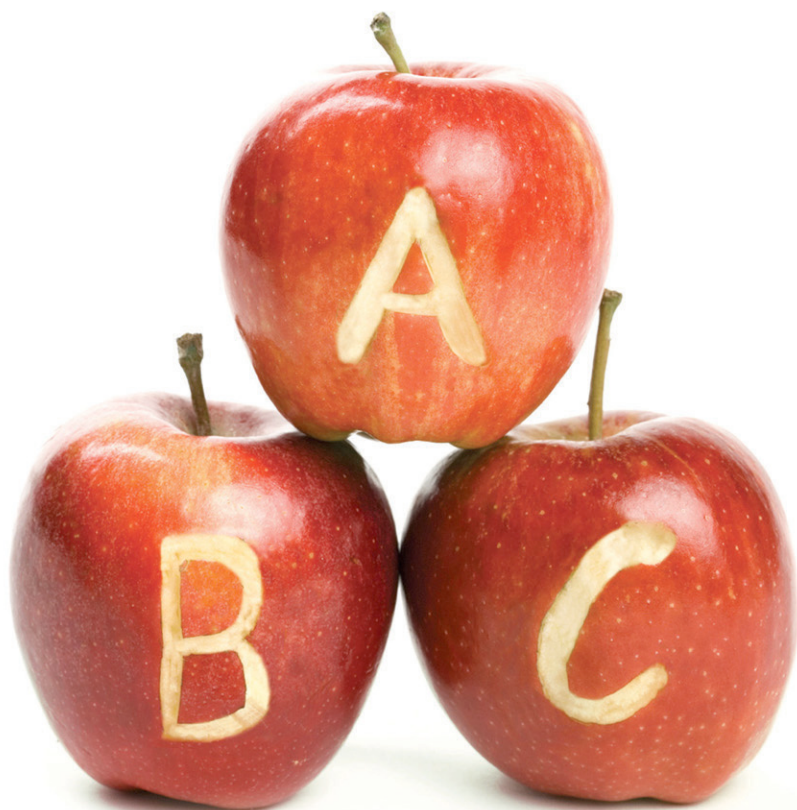


GETTING WHOLE, GETTING WELL

*Healing Holistically from
Chronic Illness*



Iris R. Bell, MD PhD

More Praise for *Getting Whole, Getting Well*

“*Getting Whole, Getting Well* offers a steady compass for the complex path of chronic illness. These are the very concepts transforming the practice of medicine. Physicians and healers will use this book to inform and inspire their own patients. A tremendous comfort for both individuals and their families. Truly a personal road map to lasting wellness.”

Rosa N. Schnyer, LAc, Author of *Acupuncture in the Treatment of Depression* and *Curing Depression Naturally with Chinese Medicine*

“Dr. Iris Bell’s *Getting Whole, Getting Well* is a wonderfully practical book full of deep wisdom. She differentiates treatments and therapies that provide real healing as distinct from those that tend to simply suppress disease or temporarily get rid of symptoms. Reading this book is itself healing.”

Dana Ullman, MPH, Author of *The Homeopathic Revolution: Why Famous People and Cultural Heroes Choose Homeopathy* and founder of www.homeopathic.com

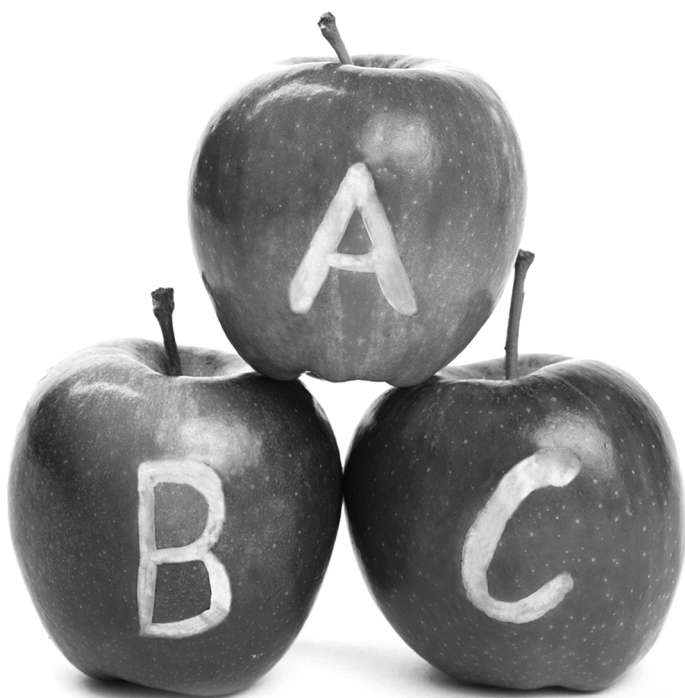
“*Getting Whole, Getting Well* is a truly great book. Dr. Bell has a knack for putting together seemingly stray bits of information in a practical, meaningful, and even inspiring way, to help you with your own health challenges. This book transcends the “it is your fault that you are ill” attitude that is otherwise common in some forms of conventional and alternative medicine. In reality, you are your own decision maker; and new approaches can turn around the course of your illness toward improved health.”

| Doris J. Rapp, MD, Author of *Our Toxic World*, *A Wake Up Call*, www.drrapp.com

**GETTING WHOLE,
GETTING WELL**

GETTING WHOLE, GETTING WELL

*Healing Holistically from
Chronic Illness*



Iris R. Bell, MD PhD



NEW YORK

GETTING WHOLE, GETTING WELL

By Iris R. Bell, MD PhD

© 2008 Iris R. Bell Associates LLC. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical or electronic, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from author or publisher (except by a reviewer, who may quote brief passages and/or show brief video clips in a review).

ISBN: 978-1-60037-387-9 Paperback

Library of Congress Control Number: 2008920323

Published by:

MORGAN • JAMES
THE ENTREPRENEURIAL PUBLISHER™

Morgan James Publishing, LLC
1225 Franklin Ave Ste 325
Garden City, NY 11530-1693
Toll Free 800-485-4943
www.MorganJamesPublishing.com

Cover and Interior Design by:

Heather Kirk
www.GraphicsByHeather.com
Heather@GraphicsByHeather.com



Disclaimer/ Legal Notice

This document is intended to provide general educational information regarding the subject matter covered. It is not intended to provide specific or personalized medical advice or treatment, and the reader is advised to seek and obtain specific and personalized medical advice and treatment from his or her own qualified health care providers. Neither the author nor the publisher assumes any responsibility for any errors or omissions. The author and publisher also specifically disclaim any responsibility or liability resulting from the use of the information and suggestions given in this book or from the use of websites, books, audiovisual products, biofeedback equipment, or other resources listed in this document.

The information provided here offers an educational resource and is not intended to serve as medical advice related to any person's specific health problems. There can be no assurance that any person's specific health problems, diseases, or symptoms will heal, recover, or otherwise resolve as a result of applying the information provided in this document or through any other documents, audiofiles,

or other media obtained from the Resources list. There also can be no assurance of safety with or absence of possible harm from any specific treatment or therapy if a specific person tries such treatment or therapy mentioned in this document or in any other documents, audiofiles, or other media obtained from the Resources list.



To everyday miracles for us all.



Contents

AcknowledgmentsXVII

ForewordXIX

Introduction — *Learn the Big Picture of Chronic Illness
and Current Health Care: the ABC Principle for your
Personalized Holistic Healing*XXIII

 The Bad – *The Problem of Chronic Conditions* ...XXIV

 The Ugly – *The Risks and Confusion of Current
Health Care*XXIV

 The Good – *The Option of Personalized Holistic
Healing with the ABC Principle (Assess,
Balance, Coordinate)*XXVI

Chapter 1 — *Start on the Healing Road: Again and
Always, Ready or Not*1

Chapter 2 — *You are Not a Car: Change your
Mindset, Not your Oil*9

 Is Your Life a Car or a Hologram?10

Zooming your Lens Up and Down the Levels of Scale in Healing	14
Life is Dynamical and Non-linear	19
Chapter 3 — <i>Stuck in the Forest? Take Stock of Your Illness and Your Healing Dynamics</i>	31
What's in Your Dynamics? Take the Disease Stuckness Quiz	37
Chapter 4 — <i><u>Assess</u>: You CAN Get There From Here: Discover All of your Options</i>	43
World Views of Nature and Health Care Options ..	44
The Conventional Medical View	44
The CAM Whole System-Oriented View ...	47
Chapter 5 — <i><u>Balance</u>: There's No Place Like Home: Set your Healing Intention</i>	57
Chapter 6 — <i><u>Coordinate</u>: Design your Own Yellow Brick Road and Get Moving</i>	63
Organizing your Treatment	64
Coordinating your Systems-Oriented Treatment Choices	65
Constitutional Systemic and Subtle Energy Treatment Options	65
Mind-Body Treatment Options	69

Structural/Manual Manipulation Treatment Options	70
Preventive and Biochemical Levels of Options	71
The What, The How, The Who of Health Care Options	72
Combining and Coordinating Options	79
Chapter 7 — <i>Pull Back the Curtain: Are you Better or Worse?</i>	83
How long to give your treatment options?	84
Pacing	86
What to Look For	86
Epilogue — <i>Now What?</i>	89
First Steps Action Plan	90
Definitions — <i>Know your Friends: Health Care Options Defined</i>	97
Resources — <i>Track Down Whom and What you Need</i>	107
Background Research Readings	121
Illustration Credits	135
About the Author	139
Reader Bonus Gifts	143

Acknowledgments

In Latin, the word “doctor” means “teacher.” In reality, we are all teachers for each other, whether or not anointed with a formal degree. My own education in illness, health, health care and healing has come from many different doctors, nurses, healers, and other health care providers, official and unofficial teachers (including numerous practitioners of various healing professions, patients, friends, colleagues, and strangers), and personal inner experiences.

With that definition, I would say that some of my teachers enraged me; some supported and nurtured me; and some don’t even know me. All of them led me to think and feel - and learn. The list of my real teachers is too long to fit into this book without boring everyone whose name does not appear and annoying anyone whose name I forget. A special thanks to my father, who told me not to let contradictions throw me. He said they’d be everywhere, and he was right.

I learn daily from a myriad of people and sources, sometimes in a slowly dawning realization over many years, sometimes in a flash of surprising insight in a moment. Healing seems to be so much a lifelong journey, and all

healing is truly self-healing. To each person who has helped teach me along my own journey, thank you for your wisdom, intentional or otherwise. As Mark van Doren, the American educator and writer said, “The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery.” And, for me, discovery is the essence of life.

Foreword

From the national evening news, blaring on the front pages of major newspapers, to internet websites and blogs, we are deluged by the panacea of the moment, with claims from both conventional and alternative medicine. Conflicting scientific outcomes are bewildering, life threatening pharmaceutical recalls abound, and today's miracle cure becomes tomorrow's nightmare.

How does an individual know what to select or, even more demanding, how to combine the best of conventional and alternative interventions into an “integrative medicine” approach that insures the best outcomes for both patient and practitioner? Fortunately, this dilemma is addressed and resolved by Dr. Iris Bell through her *Getting Whole, Getting Well* program.

Having known and worked with Dr. Bell as a colleague and friend for over 30 years, she is literally the best person to help all of us sort out this bewildering array of options. When I have had a question in such matters or how to interpret the results of a complex research study, I have

always relied on the honesty, integrity, excellent scientific and clinical skills, as well as the compassion of Dr. Bell.

Trained as a conventional physician and now a Professor of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, she is truly a world-class expert with a loving heart and deeply spiritual orientation. Gandhi exhorted his followers to “Be the change you wish to see manifest in the world” and that is Dr Bell’s philosophy as well.

Bits and pieces of what to do abound, but what is needed is an overall plan or strategy to make sense of these disparate parts. Any effective treatment plan involves conventional and alternative medicine, self care practices, different clinicians and practitioners, as well as an abiding personal tenacity or “will to live” to achieve optimal health and well being.

Getting Whole, Getting Well provides this map to integrate, coordinate and organize this multifaceted approach. Based on the “**ABC Principle**,” Dr. Bell details her three steps of: 1) **Assess** — to know your full array of options; 2) **Balance** — know that you are a living, dynamic being and how to balance all the treatments; and, 3) **Coordinate** — Make connections between your practices and practitioners rather than a patchwork of disconnected pieces. Through this ABC approach, Dr. Bell provides a clean and practical approach born out of her decades of clinical practice, research, and personal experience.

“Physis” is the Latin root of the word physician, and it has both an external and internal dimension. Externally,

the role of the healer was to harmonize the individual with his or her physical, social and cultural environment. Internally, “physis” referred to the “healing force within.” Today, as in the roots of all healing traditions, the role of the physician and healer is to harmonize the individual with the environment and elicit the healing forces within. It is in keeping with this perennial wisdom and timeless compassion that Dr. Bell provides all of us with a practical, effective, and compassionate map of our unique pathway to optimal health and well being.

Kenneth R. Pelletier, PhD, MD(hc)

Clinical Professor of Medicine

University of Arizona College of Medicine

and University of California School of Medicine

(UCSF) San Francisco

Author of New Medicine: Family Health Guide

Introduction

Learn the Big Picture of Chronic Disease and
Health Care: The ABC Principle for Your
Personalized Holistic Healing

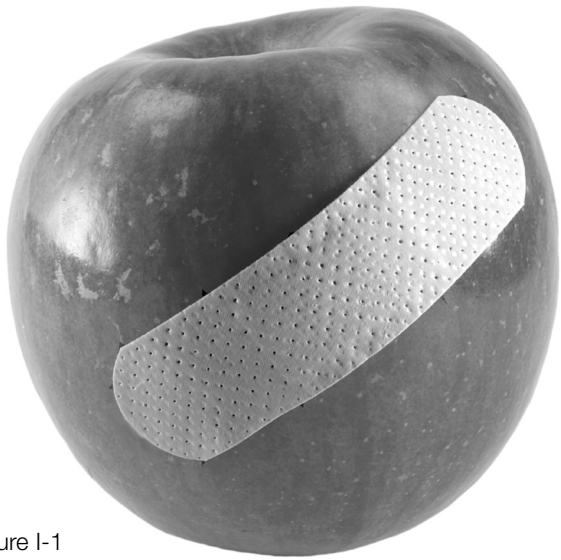


Figure I-1

*“It’s no longer a question of staying healthy. It’s a
question of finding a sickness you like.”*

~Jackie Mason

The Bad — *The Problem of Chronic Conditions*

In the past century, chronic diseases (those lasting 6 months or more) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, lung diseases, arthritis, and many others have become a much larger health problem in the U.S. and other developed nations than are infectious diseases. One out of every ten Americans suffers from a chronic disabling condition such as arthritis, back problems, a heart or lung condition that reduces quality of life over periods of years. Seventy percent of the deaths in the U.S. each year are due to a chronic disease. Seventy-eight percent of health care costs are for treatment of chronic diseases. In short, chronic disease eventually touches all of us -- ourselves and our families.

The Ugly — *The Risks and Confusion of Current Health Care*

"His sickness increases from the remedies applied to cure it."

~Virgil

Although modern mainstream medicine has made many amazing advances in prolonging lives and controlling symptoms, people with chronic diseases know from their own experience that the available treatments often bring many limitations, side effects, and problems. For example, a study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* estimated that over 2 million hospitalized patients in 1994

experienced adverse drug reactions, including over 100,000 fatal drug reactions.

The number of deaths from “properly” prescribed drugs placed prescription drugs as the sixth leading cause of death in this country, after heart disease, cancer, stroke, lung disease, and accidents and before pneumonia and diabetes. Yet, eighty percent of older adults take at least three medications daily. Patients on five drugs also have a 50-50 risk of suffering from an adverse drug interaction. The rates of adverse reactions seem to be rising even more in recent follow-up studies.

Meanwhile, persons with and without chronic diseases seek out complementary and alternative medicine (**CAM**) of various types in large numbers — including prayer — 75% of American adults have used CAM, most often for pain problems in the back, neck, and joints. For many chronic diseases, the majority of affected persons use both conventional and CAM treatments. They usually do not even inform their physician that they are doing so. At the same time, health care providers are recognizing more and more adverse interactions between drugs (both prescription and non-prescription types) and natural products such as herbs.

Conventional medical care and patients are at a crisis point – high costs, low patient and provider satisfaction with the health care process, many confusing options, and a growing chronic disease burden on society and the individual. How does a person with chronic disease find a way out of this box?

This book is intended for people with chronic illnesses of all types who prefer to have a big picture plan or roadmap of strategy and tactics before diving into the specifics of dealing with any life challenge — in health or another area.

The Good — The Option of Personalized Holistic Healing with the ABC Principle

The point of the book is that you can learn to build your own effective individualized program of holistic healing care that includes practitioner-provided and self-care interventions – but you have to understand where each option fits into the big picture. Most other books on CAM are either introductory overview encyclopedias of treatment modalities or in depth explanations of one type of CAM. But, all CAM treatments — just as with Western medicine — are not the same, in terms of their potential to help different people with different types of health conditions.

As a consumer, you probably find it hard to decide what is best for you. Many people combine treatments without giving much thought to interactions — good or bad — between them, let alone the potential for the package of care to help them overall.

Picking treatments just because you prefer something more familiar or easier to do, rather than something less familiar and harder to try could keep you from maximizing your results. And, picking treatments — or, sometimes, providers, because they helped Aunt Alma is no guarantee that you'll get what you need to solve your problems. For

many people with chronic illnesses, putting together a handful of vitamins and minerals and herbs is a way to start, but it is usually not enough. True healing is a complex but rewarding journey, not an overnight cure from a magic pill. Putting your options into a larger perspective will make it much clearer for you to know what to do.

This book is different. *Getting Whole, Getting Well* gives you an alternative to the confusion — with the ABC Principle of personalized holistic healing. The ABC Principle is a way to create your own individualized plan for getting the most benefit and least risk from the integrated package of care that you will develop. Throughout this book, you will see these ideas at work:

Assess

Assess your options and how they might help you. Re-assess the benefits and risks before you begin and periodically throughout treatment for each intervention and for the package of care that you choose

Balance

Balance yourself as a living system whose body parts all play different, essential, and interrelated roles within you, by balancing the elements of your treatment package to serve your ability as a whole not only to survive, but also to thrive

Coordinate

Coordinate the elements of your treatment plan as a whole, interconnected system of care intended

to balance you, not as a patchwork collection of things-I'd-like-to-try-and-see-what-helps-each-separate-symptom

The word “holistic” is seemingly out of fashion. People talk instead, more recently, about “complementary and alternative medicine” and “integrative medicine” as a way of explaining the political role of certain treatments within the larger health care system, where conventional Western medicine is assumed to be “best.” But Western medicine treats a person as a patchwork collection of body parts, each treated (“fixed”) separately. A major limitation of emphasizing the name for the treatment type is that we lose sight of the main point. That is, any treatment is in the service of the person who wants and needs to heal as a whole being.

A person does not seek help to heal by using a specific treatment tool. “Holistic” brings the focus back onto the person, where it belongs. The underlying message is the importance of the holistic, systemic nature of the person, the goal of balance among the person’s interconnected and indivisible “parts” (whether labeled by Western medicine or by CAM with different diagnoses or words), and the facilitating role for a coordinated package of care in helping the person achieve balance.

Many forms of CAM diagnose a person in an individualized way. But, the process of true holism involves more than honoring a person’s preferences. True holism is also more than acknowledging spiritual, mental, emotional, social, and

physical aspects of a person as if each of these aspects were a body part to treat separately. The truly holistic use of CAM inherently coordinates the elements of care toward the singular goal of balancing and healing the whole person as a unique individual...that is, Personalized Holistic Healing.

Critics point out that conventional Western medicine often emphasizes the diagnosis (disease-centered care) rather than the person with the condition (person-centered care). By our choice of language, we have made a subtle shift away from recognition that it is the person who has whatever manifestations of illness he or she experiences. Our language instead labels us as being the manifestations, the symptoms, the diagnosis. It is time to think about symptoms and conditions as clues to a fundamental imbalance present throughout the person, an imbalance that holistic treatment can gently set back into balance and then maintain. Then the person will manifest wellness.

The material here offers my own personal and professional perspective, based on over 30 years of being both a patient and a professional with one foot in mainstream medicine and the other in alternative medicine. I have learned that there are answers for each of us, but no simple prescription is good for everyone. So, to each person on his or her journey of healing — Godspeed to you.

Iris R. Bell, MD PhD

ibell@GettingWhole.com • www.IrisBell.com

Tucson, Arizona

Chapter 1

Start on the Healing Road – Again and
Always, Ready or Not



Figure 1-1

“Toto — I’ve a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore.”

*~Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz**

One of my favorite movies is the *Wizard of Oz*. In telling its timeless and entertaining story, the movie teaches many essential life lessons. It is the story of a young girl from a Kansas farm, Dorothy Gale, whose world gets turned upside down and transported over the rainbow by what she experiences as a tornado. Everything she believed, thought, and did in her usual world is different. Scarecrows talk, trees come alive and throw apples, monkeys fly, witches pop in and out — nothing is the same as it was in her Kansas world.

People with chronic illnesses find themselves shocked and bewildered when they are displaced from “normal” everyday life into their own new world of difficulties. Your usual life has been swept away by your own personal tornado and dumped into an unknown land with unknown people and new rules about how things work. Not only do you have to deal with figuring out how to get the best health care, but you also have to adjust your goals, dreams, relationships, and everyday life around your illness. How you deal with the difficulties determines how your story ends.

This book gives you a way to look at the process of having one or more chronic diseases and of healing yourself as the individual who experiences them. This is not a one-minute solution to chronic illness or an ordinary list of how-to’s and where to get help. It is a practical health philosophy book for people who need to make sense of what has happened to them. The book helps you see your illness

pattern in a larger context and to discern how to select from and orchestrate the overwhelming options for treatment that bombard you with promises of cure.

“Pay no...attention to that man behind the curtain.”

~The Wizard of Oz

Some people quit and let the disease take over. They go to sleep in the poppy field and don't wake up. Some find ways to cope and accept their limitations. They may find their way to Oz, but they never leave — they just proceed to live in their bearable, but stuck place. And some seek ways to “fix” the problem. Those people try to find the Wizard of Oz, who, they expect, has “The Answer” for making the problem miraculously go away. The thing is, the Wizard is often, at best, a well-intentioned caring mortal who really can't change their problem very much, or at worst, a fraud who makes promises he cannot keep.

You are a unique individual who needs a unique package of care and tailored advice. You must develop a self-directed plan for choosing the healing mentors and using the package of healing methods best for you. You will go through a great deal to learn that you have gathered the answers all along the way — so that, in the end, you are ready to click your heels and say, “There's no place like home, there's no place like home, there's no place like home.” And you get home. To health.

But how do you figure out this special plan? It's a secret that only a few people stumble upon in their lives. The secret is that you have to go home to yourself, your true self, by way of your own personal life journey down a yellow brick road of obstacles, mystery, and change. There are both spiritual and practical steps you can and must take to heal.

Health problems are part of your life's journey; they are not detours that take you off your path. You can't force your body to stop having a disease or symptoms. If you do, more problems will pop up somewhere else. Get help staying on the road, assembling tools, supporters and fellow travelers, until the healing happens in its own time, in your own time, with your own answer.

Five personal qualities necessary to carry you through your challenges with chronic illness are:

- Courage (The Cowardly Lion)
- Heart (The Tin Woodman)
- Clarity in thinking (The Scarecrow)
- Persistence (Dorothy)
- Openness to change (Dorothy)

Glinda, the Good Witch — *"You don't need to be helped any longer. You've always had the power to go back to Kansas."*

Dorothy — *"I have?"*

Scarecrow — “*Then why didn’t you tell her before?*”

Glinda, the Good Witch — “*Because she wouldn’t have believed me. She had to learn it for herself.*”

In addition, you also need the right information, social support (a scarecrow, a lion, a tin woodsman, and a Toto, not to mention Auntie Em and Uncle Henry), and the ability to sort through the information with advice from a mentor who can see the big picture of your particular situation and help you at the right time. You need a Glinda, the Good Witch of the North, a mentor to point you in the right direction and keep you safe when danger lurks.

In the movie, everybody tells Dorothy that the answer lies in following the yellow brick road to the Wizard. That road is far from safe or straight in getting her where she needs to arrive, but it guides her into the experiences she must live through so that she can ultimately get home.

Getting Whole, Getting Well is your first Glinda to start you off along your own personal yellow brick road with a big picture overview of what happens in disease, health, health care, and, ultimately, self-healing. Many books talk about wellness measures such as diet, exercise, and meditation that are basic and valuable for everyone, but usually not enough to move the person with chronic disease into true healing.

I intend *Getting Whole, Getting Well* to help serve as part of your decision-making process in making informed

“Most people have come to prefer certain of life’s experiences and deny and reject others, unaware of the value of the hidden things that may come wrapped in plain and even ugly paper. In avoiding all pain and seeking comfort at all costs, we may be left without intimacy or compassion; in rejecting change and risk we often cheat ourselves of the quest; in denying our suffering we may never know our strength or our greatness.”

| Rachel Naomi Remen, MD

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

| World Health Organization

"*Getting Whole, Getting Well* is a must read for anyone who has the passion to live larger than their diagnosis. This is a book that will save lives."

~ Rachel Naomi Remen, MD, Bestselling Author of *Kitchen Table Wisdom* and *My Grandfather's Blessings*

"*Getting Whole, Getting Well* can mark the beginning of your healing journey through chronic illness. This is a highly practical guide you can count on for results. I regard Dr. Bell as a true pioneer in natural health."

~ Andrew Weil, MD, Bestselling Author of *Healthy Aging* and *8 Weeks to Optimum Health*

Take the Guesswork Out of Choosing Alternative Treatments for Your Chronic Illness

Until now, trial and error has been the way most of us experiment with alternative healing techniques like vitamins, herbal supplements, and acupuncture. Other books offer encyclopedic information on different therapies. But, it is possible to create a personalized, holistic healing plan that works.

Only *Getting Whole, Getting Well* shows you how to choose and use the ones that are right for you. No guesswork. No wandering in the wilderness. If you've been disappointed in your results or confused about the multitude of options available, now learn how to:

- Adopt the total healing mindset necessary for optimal results
- Choose the alternative therapies that work best for you and your health issues
- Know what to expect—how long different therapies should take to work, and more
- Avoid the No.1 mistake most people make when using alternative therapies

Read this book if you have suffered for six months or longer with any chronic condition, including:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| ● Asthma | ● Chronic fatigue | ● Heart disease |
| ● Arthritis | ● Depression | ● Irritable bowel |
| ● Back pain | ● Diabetes | ● Migraine headache |
| ● Cancer | ● Fibromyalgia | ● Multiple sclerosis |

Iris R. Bell, MD PhD is a Board-certified psychiatrist, alternative medicine researcher, award-winning author, and university professor, currently living in Tucson, Arizona.

www.GettingWhole.com



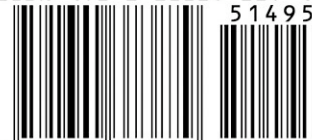
MORGAN • JAMES
THE ENTREPRENEURIAL PUBLISHER
www.morganjamespublishing.com



Cover & Interior
Design By:
Heather Kirk
GraphicsByHeather.com

HEALTH AND FITNESS /
Alternative Therapies

ISBN 978-1-60037-387-9



9 781600 373879 \$14.95