Alternative View

May 2, 2011 By Willette Francis

In his POZ Blog entry "Alice Down the Rabbit Hole" (February 12), Mike Barr shared how he uses alternative medicine to help manage his HIV. After reading his story, many of you expressed how important such regimens have been throughout your journey to good health. Some of you even expressed an interest in knowing how these treatments, such as acupuncture and herbal remedies, could boost your overall wellness and quality of life. Here, a sampling of your comments on alternative medicines.

Please keep this going. I would love to learn more about Chinese medicine and herbs. I am very interested as I do tons of holistic stuff and it seems to work on me. **—Lily Rose**

Just stumbled upon your most excellent blog. I've been cruising around Chinatown in San Francisco and Oakland trying to learn something from [herbal medicine] practitioners in regard to HIV. It has not been an easy path. Please keep writing as it really helps and propels others. I, too, have been less optimistic about reducing the daily ingestion of modern science. Grateful as I am to be here, I know other therapies have made that journey possible. **—Dave W.**

I would be very interested in more talk of Eastern medicine and other informative messages you have to provide. My [lab] numbers are great, but my body says different. I have definitely noticed a difference in the past 10 years of being healthy, mostly the night sweats and mood swings.**—Geo**

Stepping into the world of Chinese medicine is not so simple. Working with a practitioner who is an herbologist is important, as they have the knowledge and access to formulas. Even though herbs [can] be bought on the market, it is best to get a trained practitioner to prescribe for you. An acupuncturist who does herbs can help you. Just ask around; Chinese medicine is getting more and more popular. You will be surprised how many people have gone for acupuncture. **—Mark Kuebel**

For several years I was able to get acupuncture and herbal medicines through a grant to my local AIDS service organization. My health radically improved. However, the funding for this program dried up, and it has been many years since I have been able to access traditional Asian medicine. What are those of us on fixed incomes to do? Acupuncture, etc. are not cheap if you are paying out of pocket.**—Michael Palumbaro**

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