The Holistic Truth

July 1, 1999

Sometimes the most valuable insights come from far away. A large study in Zimbabwe found that PWAs advised by traditional healers about herbs, nutrition and the soul lived longer and fared better than those treated in hospitals. Granted, in Zimbabwe, as in much of Africa, most hospitals have little to offer, largely because government austerity programs forced by Western bank debts have stripped them of drugs and supplies. But growing evidence suggests that strategically chosen herbs, diet changes and spiritual healing—the main tools available to African PWAs—can improve and extend lives (see “Back to the Roots"). So whether in Africa or the developed world, the fight for better HIV treatment is not just about getting more drugs, but also about achieving a more holistic approach.

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