

# HOW AND WHEN TO BE YOUR OWN DOCTOR?

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*“A Wellness Guide By Yourself”*



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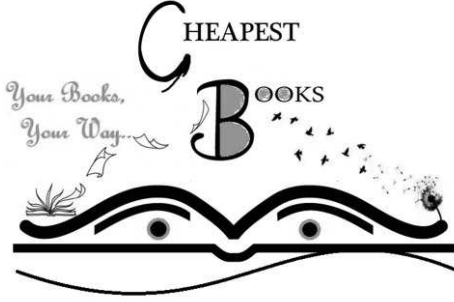
*By*

**Dr. Isabelle A. Moser**

**With**

**Steve Solomon**

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# ABOUT THE BOOK & AUTHORS:

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**Dr. Isabelle Moser** was born on 1940 and died in 1996. The greatest accomplishment of her 56 year was to meld virtually all available knowledge about health and healing into a workable and most importantly.

**Steve Solomon** is a well-known west coast gardening guru, and author of five previous books. The founder of Territorial Seed Company, he has taught Master Gardener and Urban Farm classes at the University of Oregon in Eugene.

\* \* \*

## How and When to Be Your Own Doctor?

This book was written to help educate the general public about the virtues of natural medicine and to encourage the next generation of natural healers.

### **Introduction**

#### ▶ Forward

Tis a gift to be simple Tis a gift to be simple Tis a gift to be free,  
Tis a gift to come down Where we ought to be. And when we find  
ourselves In a place just ...

### **Chapter 1**

#### ▶ Chapter One: How I Became a Hygienist: Part1

From The Hygienic Dictionary Doctors. [1] In the matter of disease and healing, the people have been treated as serfs. The doctor is a dictator who knows it ...

▶ How I Became a Hygienist: Part2

According to the Hippocratic Oath, the first criteria of a treatment is that it should do no harm. Once again I found myself trapped in a system that made me feel ...

▶ How I Became a Hygienist: Part3

I then administered Coca's Pulse Test (see the Appendix) and quickly discovered Elizabeth was wildly intolerant to wheat and dairy products. Following the well ...

▶ How I Became a Hygienist: Part4

So people started to come to Great Oaks School of Health to rest up from a demanding job, to drop some excess weight, and generally to eliminate the adverse ...

## **Chapter 2**

▶ Chapter Two: The Nature and Cause of Disease

From *The Hygienic Dictionary* Toxemia. [1] Toxemia is the basic cause of all so-called diseases. In the process of tissue-building (metabolism), there is cell- ...

▶ The Cause Of Disease

Ever since natural medicine arose in opposition to the violence of so-called scientific medicine, every book on the subject of hygiene, once it gets past its ...

▶ Why People Get Sick

This is the Theory of Toxemia. A healthy body struggles continually to purify itself of poisons that are inevitably produced while going about its business of ...

▶ The Digestive Process

After we have eaten our four-color meal--often we do this in a hurry, without much chewing, under a lot of stress, or in the presence of negative emotions--we ...

▶ The Progress Of Disease: Irritation, Enervation, Toxemia

Disease routinely lies at the end of a three-part chain that goes: irritation or sub-clinical malnutrition, enervation, toxemia. Irritations are something the ...

▶ Secondary Eliminations Are Disease

However the exact form the chain from irritation or malnutrition to enervation progresses, the ultimate result is an increased level of toxemia, placing an ...

### **Chapter 3**

▶ Chapter Three: Fasting

From *The Hygienic Dictionary* Cure.[1] There is no cure for disease; fasting is not a cure. Fasting facilitates natural healing processes. Foods do not cure.

▶ Fasting: The Effort Of Digestion

Digestion is a huge, unappreciated task, unappreciated because few of us are aware of its happening in the same way we are aware of making efforts to use our ...

▶ How Fasting Heals

Its an old hygienic maxim that the doctor does not heal, the medicines do not heal, only the body heals itself. If the body can t heal then nothing can heal it.

▶ Essentials of a Successful, Safe Fast

1. Fast in a bright airy room, with exceptionally good ventilation, because fasters not only need a lot of fresh air; their bodies give off powerfully ...

▶ The Prime Rules Of Fasting

Another truism of natural hygiene is that we dig our own graves with our teeth. It is sad but true that almost all eat too much quantity of too little quality.

▶ Length Of The Fast

How long should a person fast? In cases where there are serious complaints to remedy but where there are no life threatening disease conditions, a good rule of ...

▶ My Own 56 Day Long Fast

Fasters go through a lot of different emotional states, these can get intense and do change quite rapidly. The physical body, too, will manifest transitory ...

▶ Common Fasting Complaints And Discomforts

The most frequently heard complaints of fasters are headaches, dry, cracked lips, dizziness, blurred vision with black spots that float, skin rashes, and ...

▶ Fasting: The Healing Crisis And Retracing

Certain unpleasant somatics that occur while fasting (or while on a healing diet) may not be dangerous or bad. Two types, the healing crisis, and retracing, ...

▶ The Unrelenting Boredom Of Fasting

Then there s the unrelenting boredom of fasting. Most people have been media junkies since they were kids; the only way they believe they can survive another ...



▶ Exercise While Fasting

The issue of how much activity is called for on a fast is controversial. Natural Hygienists in the Herbert Shelton tradition insist that all fasters absolutely ...

▶ The Stages Of Fasting

The best way to understand what happens when we fast is to break up the process into six stages: preparation for the fast, loss of hunger, acidosis, ...

▶ Less-Rigorous-Than-Water Fasts

There are gradations of fasting measures ranging from rigorous to relatively casual. Water fasting is the most rapid and effective one. Other methods have been ...

▶ Fasting: Raw Food Healing Diets

Next in declining order of healing effectiveness is what I call a raw food healing diet or cleansing diet. It consists of those very same watery fruits and ...

▶ Fasting: Complete Recovery Of The Seriously Ill

Its a virtual certainty that to fully recover, a seriously ill person will have to significantly rebuild numerous organs. They have a hard choice: to accept a ...

▶ Fasting: Starvation

It is true that ethical medical doctors use the least-risky procedure they are allowed to use. But this does not mean there are no risks to allopathic ...

▶ Weight Loss By Fasting

Loss of weight indicates, almost guarantees, that detoxification and healing is occurring. I can t stress this too much. Of all the things I find my patients ...

▶ Cases Beyond The Remedy Of Fasting

Occasionally, very ill people have a liver that has become so degenerated it cannot sustain the burden of detoxification. This organ is as vital to survival as ...

▶ Social/Cultural/Psychological Obstacles To Fasting

Numerous attitudes make it difficult to fast or to provide moral support to friends or loved ones that are fasting. Many people harbor fears of losing weight ...

▶ Preventative Fasting

During the years it takes for a body to degenerate enough to prompt a fast, the body has been storing up large quantities of unprocessed toxins in the cells, ...

## **Chapter 4**

▶ Chapter Four: Colon Cleansing

From *The Hygienic Dictionary* Autointoxication. [1] the accumulations on the bowel wall become a breeding ground for unhealthy bacterial life forms. The heavy ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: Most Diseases Cure Themselves

If you ask any honest medical doctor how they cure diseases, they will tell you that most acute disease conditions and a smaller, though significant percentage ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: The Repugnant Bowel

I don't know why, but people of our culture have a deep-seated reluctance to relate to the colon or it's functions. People don't want to think about the colon ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: What Is Constipation?

Most people think they are not constipated because they have a bowel movement almost every day, accomplished without straining. I have even had clients tell me ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: The Development Of My Own Constipation

The history of my own constipation, though it especially relates to a very rustic childhood, is typical of many people. I was also raised on a very ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: Rapid Relief From Colon Cleansing

During fasting the liver is hard at work processing toxins released from fat and other body deposits. The liver still dumps its wastes into the intestines ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: Enemas Versus Colonics

People frequently wonder what is the difference between a colonic and an enema. First of all enemas are a lot cheaper because you give them to yourself; an ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: How To Give Yourself An Enema

Enemas have been medically out of favor for a long time. Most people have never had one. So here are simple directions to self-administer an effective enema ...

▶ Colon Cleansing: Curing With Enemas

It is not wise to continue regular colonics or enemas once a detoxification program has been completed and you have returned to a maintenance diet. The body ...

## **Chapter 5**

### ▶ Diet and Nutrition

From *The Hygienic Dictionary* Food. Life is a tragedy of nutrition. In food lies 99.99% of the causes of all diseases and imperfect health of any kind. Prof.

### ▶ Diet and Nutrition: The Confusions About Diets and Foods

Like my daughter, many people of all ages are muddled about the relationship between health and diet. Their confusions have created a profitable market for ...

### ▶ Diet and Nutrition: The Fundamental Principle

If you are a true believer in any of the above food religions, I expect that you will find my views unsettling. But what I consider good diet results from my ...

### ▶ Diet and Nutrition: Lessons From Nutritional Anthropology

The next logical pair of questions are: how healthy could good nutrition make people be, and, how much deviation from ideal nutrition could we allow ourselves ...

### ▶ Diet and Nutrition: Finding Your Ideal Dietary

Anyone that is genuinely interested in having the best possible health should make their own study of the titles listed in the bibliography in the back of this ...

### ▶ Diet and Nutrition: The Human Comedy

I know most of my readers have been heavily indoctrinated about food and think they already know the truth about dietetics. I also know that so much ...

### ▶ Diet and Nutrition: The Organic Versus Chemical Feud

Now, regrettably, and at great personal risk to my reputation, I must try to puncture the very favorite belief of food religionists, the doctrine that ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: The Poor Start

For this reason it makes sense to take vitamins and food supplements, to be discussed in the next chapter. And because our food supply, Organic or conventional, ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: Butter, Margarine and Fats in General.

Recently, enormous propaganda has been generated against eating butter. Its been smeared in the health magazines as a saturated animal fat, one containing that ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: Milk, Meat, And Other Protein Foods

Speaking of butter, how about milk? The dairy lobby is very powerful in North America. Its political clout and campaign contributions have the governments of ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: The Development Of Allergies

There are three ways a body can become allergic. (1) It can have a genetic predisposition for a specific allergy to start with. (2) It can be repeatedly ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: Flour, And Other Matters Relating To Seeds

One of the largest degradations to human health was caused by the roller mill. This apparently profitable machine permitted the miller to efficiently separate ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: Freshness Of Fruits And Vegetables

Most people do not realize the crucial importance of freshness when it comes to produce. In the same way that seeds gradually die, fruits and vegetables go ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: The Real Truth About Salt And Sugar

First, let me remind certain food religionists: salt is salt is salt is salt and sugar is sugar is sugar. There are no good forms of salt and no good forms of ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: Food Combining And "Healthfood Junkfood."

This brings us to a topic I call healthfood junkfood. Many people improve their diet, eliminating meat and chemicalized food in favor of whole grains and ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: Diets To Heal The Critically Ill

A critically ill person is someone who could expire at any moment; therapeutic interventions are racing against death. Can the body repair itself enough before ...

▶ Diet and Nutrition: Food In The Order Of Digestive Difficulty

Individual digestive weaknesses and allergies are not taken into account in this list. Hard To Digest: Meat, fish, chicken, eggs (if cooked), all legumes ...

▶ Diet For The Chronically Ill.

The chronically ill person has a long-term degenerative condition that is not immediately life threatening. This condition usually causes more-or-less ...

▶ Diet For The Acutely Ill

The acutely ill person experiences occasional attacks of distressing symptoms, usually after indiscretions in living or emotional upsets. They have a cold, or ...

▶ Diet For A Healthy Person

I doubt that it is possible to be totally healthy in the twentieth century. Doctors Alsleben and Shute in their book *How to Survive the New Health Catastrophes* ...

▶ Diet Is Not Enough

Those isolated, long-lived peoples discovered by Weston A. Price had to do hard physical labor to eat, had to walk briskly up and down steep terrain to get ...

▶ Diet For A Long, Long Life

Some people not only want to be healthy, but they want to live in good health long past the normal life span projected by statistical tables for Homo Sapiens.

## **Chapter 6**

▶ Chapter Six: Vitamins and Other Food Supplements

From *The Hygienic Dictionary* Vitamins. The staple foods may not contain the same nutritive substances as in former times. . . . Chemical fertilizers, by ...

▶ Vitamins For Young Persons And Children

Young healthy people from weaning through their thirties should also take nutritional supplements even though young people usually feel so good that they find ...

▶ Vitamins For An Older Healthy Person

Someone who is beyond 35 to 40 years of age should still feel good almost all of the time. That is how life should be. But enjoying well-being does not mean ...

▶ Vitamins and Other Food Supplements: The Future Of Life Extension

I beg the readers indulgence for a bit of futurology about what things may look like if the life extension movement continues to develop. Right now, a full ...

▶ Vitamin Program For The Sick

No matter which way you look at it or how well insured you may be against it, being sick is expensive (not to mention what it does to one's quality of life), ...

▶ Vitamin C

Vitamin C is not a newly discovered vitamin, but was one of the first ever identified. If you are one of those people that just hate taking vitamins, and you ...

▶ Co-enzyme Q-10

Co-enzyme Q-10 substance is normally manufactured in the human body and is also found in minuscule amounts in almost every cell on Earth. For that reason it is ...

▶ DMAE

DMAE is another extremely valuable vitamin-like substance that is not widely known. It is a basic building material that the body uses to make acetylcholine, ...

▶ Lecithin

Lecithin is a highly tonic and inexpensive food supplement that is underutilized by many people even though it is easily obtainable in healthfood stores. It is ...

▶ Algae

Algae . Spirulina or sun dried chlorella are also great food supplements. Both make many people feel energized, pepped-up. It is possible to fast on either ...

## **Chapter 7**

▶ Chapter Seven: The Analysis of Disease States: Helping the Body Recover

From the Hygienic Dictionary Diagnosis. [1] In the United States, making a diagnosis implies that you are a doctor duly licensed to engage in diagnostic ...



▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Arthritis

Some years back my 70 years old mother came from the family homestead in the wilds of northern British Columbia to visit me at the Great Oaks School. She had ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Breast Cancer

I have worked with many young women with breast cancer; so many in fact, that their faces and cases tend to blur. But whenever I think about them, Kelly ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Constant Complaints

Alice was a middle-aged woman who couldn't understand why she had always felt tired, even when she was young. Her life had been this way ever since she could ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: A Rampaging Infection

At the age of 40, John, an old bohemian client of mine, came into a moderate inheritance and went native in the Fiji Islands in the South Pacific. He spent ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Chronic Back Pain

Barry was a carpenter who couldn't afford to lose work because he was unable to bend or twist or lift. He frequently had bouts of severe back pain that made ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Painful Menstruation

Elsie was twenty. She came to see me because I had helped Elsie's mother overcome breast cancer many years earlier. Elsie began to have very painful periods ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Irritable Bowels

Some peoples' lives don't run smoothly. Jeanne's certainly didn't. She was abandoned to raise three little kids on welfare. Her college diploma turned out to ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: A Collection of Gallbladders

Gallbladder cases are rather ho-hum to me; they are quick to respond to hygienic treatment and easy to resolve. I've fixed lots of them. But an inflamed ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: The Frightening Heart

Heart disease is one of the major causes of death among North Americans. It evokes images of resuscitation, of desperate races against time, trying to restart ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Other Kinds Of Cancer

There seem to be many other kinds of cancer, at least if you believe the medical doctors. They divide up cancers and their treatments by their location in the ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Onion Cases

All too many of my cases are what I privately refer to as onion cases. By this I mean the opposite of a simple case. There are multiple complaints. I call them ...

▶ The Analysis of Disease States: Unethical Illness

I see a lot of spiritually-induced physical illness in my practice. Maybe more than my share. Maybe its karmic; it tends to find me because I understand it.

## **Appendices**

▶ Appendix: Pulse Testing For Allergies

Coca's Pulse Tests are extraordinarily useful and simple tools for at-home allergy detection. My clients have succeeded at using this approach without ...

▶ Appendix: Vitamin and Supplement Suppliers

Bronson Pharmaceutical 1945 Craig Road P.O. Box 46903 St. Louis, MO 63146 [800] 525-8466 Douglas Cooper Products Box 65976 Los Angeles, CA 90065 [800] 234-8686 ...

▶ Appendix: Publishers Of Books Not Readily Findable

Life Extension Foundation 2835 Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood, Florida 33020 [800] 544-0577 I strongly recommend joining and regularly studying their newsletter.

▶ Appendix: Bibliography

Airola, P. N. D., PhD (1974).How to Get Well. Phoenix: Health Plus Publishers. Albrecht, W. A. (1975).The Albrecht Papers . Kansas City: Acres, USA. Alexander, ...

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# FORWARD

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*Tis a gift to be simple  
Tis a gift to be free,  
Tis a gift to come down  
Where we ought to be.  
And when we find ourselves  
In a place just right,  
It will be in the valley  
Of love and delight.*

Old Shaker Hymn  
Favorite of Dr. Isabelle Moser



I was a physically tough, happy-go-lucky fellow until I reached my late thirties. Then I began to experience more and more off days when I did not feel quite right. I thought I possessed an iron constitution. Although I grew a big food garden and ate mostly "vegetablitarian" I thought I could eat anything with impunity. I had been fond of drinking beer with my friends while nibbling on salty snacks or heavy foods late into the night. And until my health began to weaken I could still get up the next morning after several homebrewed beers, feeling good, and would put in a solid day's work.



When my health began to slip I went looking for a cure. Up to that time the only use I'd had for doctors was to fix a few traumatic injuries. The only preventative health care I concerned myself with was to take a multivitamin pill during those rare spells when I felt a bit run down and to eat lots of vegetables. So I'd not learned much about alternative health care.

Naturally, my first stop was a local general practitioner/MD. He gave me his usual half-hour get-acquainted checkout and opined that there almost certainly was nothing wrong with me. I suspect I had the good fortune to encounter an honest doctor, because he also said if it were my wish he could send me around for numerous tests but most likely these would not reveal anything either. More than likely, all that was wrong was that I was approaching 40; with the onset of middle age I would naturally have more aches and pains. 'Take some aspirin and get used to it,' was his advice. 'It'll only get worse.'

Not satisfied with his dismal prognosis I asked an energetic old guy I knew named Paul, an '80-something homesteader who was renowned for his organic garden and his good health. Paul referred me to his doctor, Isabelle Moser, who at that time was running the Great Oaks School of Health, a residential and out-patient spa nearby at Creswell, Oregon. Dr. Moser had very different methods of analysis than the medicos, was warmly personal and seemed very safe to talk to. She looked me over, did some strange magical thing she called muscle testing and concluded that I still had a very strong constitution. If I would eliminate certain "bad" foods from my diet, eliminate some generally healthful foods that, unfortunately, I was allergic to, if I would reduce my alcohol intake greatly and take some food

supplements, then gradually my symptoms would abate. With the persistent application of a little self-discipline over several months, maybe six months, I could feel really well again almost all the time and would probably continue that way for many years to come. This was good news, though the need to apply personal responsibility toward the solution of my problem seemed a little sobering.

But I could also see that Dr. Moser was obviously not telling me something. So I gently pressed her for the rest. A little shyly, reluctantly, as though she were used to being rebuffed for making such suggestions, Isabelle asked me if I had ever heard of fasting? 'Yes,' I said. "I had. Once when I was about twenty and staying at a farm in Missouri, during a bad flu I actually did fast, mainly because I was too sick to take anything but water for nearly one week." "Why do you ask?" I demanded.

"If you would fast, you will start feeling really good as soon as the fast is over." she said.

"Fast? How long?"

"Some have fasted for a month or even longer," she said. Then she observed my crestfallen expression and added, "Even a couple of weeks would make an enormous difference."

It just so happened that I was in between set-up stages for a new mail-order business I was starting and right then I did have a couple of weeks when I was virtually free of responsibility. I could also face the idea of not eating for a couple of weeks. "Okay!" I said somewhat impulsively. "I could fast for two weeks. If I start right now maybe even three weeks, depending on how my schedule works out."

So in short order I was given several small books about fasting to read at home and was mentally preparing myself for several weeks of severe privation, my only sustenance to be water and herb tea without sweetener. And then came the clinker.

"Have you ever heard of colonics?" she asked sweetly.

"Yes. Weird practice, akin to anal sex or something?"

"Not at all," she responded. "Colonics are essential during fasting or you will have spells when you'll feel terrible. Only colonics make water fasting comfortable and safe." Then followed some explanation about bowel cleansing (and another little book to take home) and soon I was agreeing to get my body over to her place for a colonic every two or three days during the fasting period, the first colonic scheduled for the next afternoon. I'll spare you a detailed description of my first fast with colonics; you'll read about others shortly. In the end I withstood the boredom of water fasting for 17 days. During the fast I had about 7 colonics. I ended up feeling great, much trimmer, with an enormous rebirth of energy. And when I resumed eating it turned out to be slightly easier to control my dietary habits and appetites.

Thus began my practice of an annual health-building water fast. Once a year, at whatever season it seemed propitious, I'd set aside a couple of weeks to heal my body. While fasting I'd slowly drive myself over to Great Oaks School for colonics every other day. By the end of my third annual fast in 1981, Isabelle and I had become great friends. About this same time Isabelle's relationship with her first husband, Douglas Moser, had disintegrated. Some months later, Isabelle and I became partners. And then we married.

My regular fasts continued through 1984, by which time I had recovered my fundamental organic vigor and had retrained my dietary habits. About 1983 Isabelle and I also began using Life Extension megavitamins as a therapy against the aging process. Feeling so much better I began to find the incredibly boring weeks of prophylactic fasting too difficult to motivate myself to do, and I stopped. Since that time I fast only when acutely ill. Generally less than one week on water handles any non-optimum health condition I've had since '84. I am only 54 years old as I write these words, so I hope it will be many, many years before I find myself in the position where I have to fast for an extended period to deal with a serious or life-threatening condition.

I am a kind of person the Spanish call *autodidactico*, meaning that I prefer to teach myself. I had already learned the fine art of self-employment and general small-business practice that way, as well as radio and electronic theory, typography and graphic design, the garden seed business, horticulture, and agronomy. When Isabelle moved in with me she also brought most of Great Oak's extensive library, including very hard to obtain copies of the works of the early hygienic doctors. Naturally I studied her books intensely.

Isabelle also brought her medical practice into our house. At first it was only a few loyal local clients who continued to consult with her on an out-patient basis, but after a few years, the demands for residential care from people who were seriously and sometimes life-threateningly sick grew irresistibly, and I found myself sharing our family house with a parade of really sick people. True, I was not their doctor, but because her residential clients became temporary parts of our family, I helped support and encourage our residents through their fasting process. I'm a natural teacher (and how-

to-do-it writer), so I found myself explaining many aspects of hygienic medicine to Isabelle's clients, while having a first-hand opportunity to observe for myself the healing process at work. Thus it was that I became the doctor's assistant and came to practice second-hand hygienic medicine.

In 1994, when Isabelle had reached the age of 54, she began to think about passing on her life's accumulation of healing wisdom by writing a book. She had no experience at writing for the popular market, her only major writing being a Ph.D. dissertation. I on the other hand had published seven books about vegetable gardening. And I grasped the essentials of her wisdom as well as any non-practitioner could. So we took a summer off and rented a house in rural Costa Rica, where I helped Isabelle put down her thoughts on a cheap word-processing typewriter. When we returned to the States, I fired-up my "big-mac" and composed this manuscript into a rough book format that was given to some of her clients to get what is trendily called these days, "feedback."

But before we could completely finish her book, Isabelle became dangerously ill and after a long, painful struggle with abdominal cancer, she died. After I resurfaced from the worst of my grief and loss, I decided to finish her book. Fortunately, the manuscript needed little more than polishing. I am telling the reader these things because many ghost-written books end up having little direct connection with the originator of the thoughts. Not so in this case. And unlike many ghost writers, I had a long and loving apprenticeship with the author. At every step of our collaboration on this book I have made every effort to communicate Isabelle's viewpoints in the way she would speak, not my own. Dr. Isabelle Moser was for many

years my dearest friend. I have worked on this book to help her pass her understanding on.

Many people consider death to be a complete invalidation of a healing arts practitioner. I don't. Coping with her own dicey health had been a major motivator for Isabelle's interest in healing others. She will tell you more about it in the chapters to come. Isabelle had been fending off cancer since its first blow up when she was 26 years old. I view that 30 plus years of defeating Death as a great success rather than consider her ultimate defeat as a failure.

Isabelle Moser was born in 1940 and died in 1996. I think the greatest accomplishment of her 56 years was to meld virtually all available knowledge about health and healing into a workable and most importantly, a simple model that allowed her to have amazing success. Her "system" is simple enough that even a generally well-educated non-medico like me can grasp it. And use it without consulting a doctor every time a symptom appears.

Finally, I should mention that over the years since this book was written I have discovered contains some significant errors of anatomical or physiological detail. Most of these happened because the book was written "off the top of Isabelle's head," without any reference materials at hand, not even an anatomy text. I have not fixed these goofs as I am not even qualified to find them all. Thus, when the reader reads such as 'the pancreas secretes enzymes into the stomach,' (actually and correctly, the duodenum) I hope they will understand and not invalidate the entire book.

# CHAPTER ONE

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## HOW I BECAME A HYGIENIST

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### FROM THE HYGIENIC DICTIONARY

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**Doctors.** [1] In the matter of disease and healing, the people have been treated as serfs. The doctor is a dictator who knows it all, and the people are stupid, dumb, driven cattle, fit for nothing except to be herded together, bucked and gagged when necessary to force medical opinion down their throats or under their skins. I found that professional dignity was more often pomposity, sordid bigotry and gilded ignorance. The average physician is a fear-monger, if he is anything. He goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may scare to death. *Dr. John. H. Tilden, Impaired Health: Its Cause and Cure, Vol. 1, 1921.*

[2] Today we are not only in the Nuclear Age but also the Antibiotic Age. Unhappily, too, this is the Dark Age of Medicine--an age in which many of my colleagues, when confronted with a patient, consult a volume which rivals the Manhattan telephone directory in size. This book contains the names of thousands upon thousands of drugs used to alleviate the distressing symptoms of a host of diseased states of the body. The doctor then decides which pink or purple or baby-blue pill to prescribe for the patient. This is not, in my opinion, the practice of medicine. Far too many of these new "miracle" drugs are introduced with fanfare and then revealed as lethal in character, to be silently discarded for newer and

more powerful drugs. *Dr. Henry Bieler: Food is Your Best Medicine; 1965.*

I have two reasons for writing this book. One, to help educate the general public about the virtues of natural medicine. The second, to encourage the next generation of natural healers. Especially the second because it is not easy to become a natural hygienist; there is no school or college or licensing board.

Most AMA-affiliated physicians follow predictable career paths, straight well-marked roads, climbing through apprenticeships in established institutions to high financial rewards and social status. Practitioners of natural medicine are not awarded equally high status, rarely do we become wealthy, and often, naturopaths arrive at their profession rather late in life after following the tangled web of their own inner light. So I think it is worth a few pages to explain how I came to practice a dangerous profession and why I have accepted the daily risks of police prosecution and civil liability without possibility of insurance.

Sometimes it seems to me that I began this lifetime powerfully predisposed to heal others. So, just for childhood warm-ups I was born into a family that would be much in need of my help. As I've always disliked an easy win, to make rendering that help even more difficult, I decided to be the youngest child, with two older brothers.

A pair of big, capable brothers might have guided and shielded me. But my life did not work out that way. The younger of my two brothers, three years ahead of me, was born with many health problems. He was weak, small, always ill, and in need of protection from other children, who are generally rough and cruel. My father abandoned our



family shortly after I was born; it fell to my mother to work to help support us. Before I was adolescent my older brother left home to pursue a career in the Canadian Air Force.

Though I was the youngest, I was by far the healthiest. Consequently, I had to pretty much raise myself while my single mother struggled to earn a living in rural western Canada. This circumstance probably reinforced my constitutional predilection for independent thought and action. Early on I started to protect my "little" brother, making sure the local bullies didn't take advantage of him. I learned to fight big boys and win. I also helped him acquire simple skills, ones that most kids grasp without difficulty, such as swimming, bike riding, tree climbing, etc.

And though not yet adolescent, I had to function as a responsible adult in our household. Stressed by anger over her situation and the difficulties of earning our living as a country school teacher (usually in remote one-room schools), my mother's health deteriorated rapidly. As she steadily lost energy and became less able to take care of the home, I took over more and more of the cleaning, cooking, and learned how to manage her--a person who feels terrible but must work to survive.

During school hours my mother was able to present a positive attitude, and was truly a gifted teacher. However, she had a personality quirk. She obstinately preferred to help the most able students become even more able, but she had little desire to help those with marginal mentalities. This predilection got her into no end of trouble with local school boards; inevitably it seemed the District Chairman would have a stupid, badly-behaved child that my mother refused to cater to. Several times we had to move in the middle of the

school year when she was dismissed without notice for "insubordination." This would inevitably happen on the frigid Canadian Prairies during mid-winter.

At night, exhausted by the day's efforts, my mother's positiveness dissipated and she allowed her mind to drift into negative thoughts, complaining endlessly about my irresponsible father and about how much she disliked him for treating her so badly. These emotions and their irresponsible expression were very difficult for me to deal with as a child, but it taught me to work on diverting someone's negative thoughts, and to avoid getting dragged into them myself, skills I had to use continually much later on when I began to manage mentally and physically ill clients on a residential basis.

My own personal health problems had their genesis long before my own birth. Our diet was awful, with very little fresh fruit or vegetables. We normally had canned, evaporated milk, though there were a few rare times when raw milk and free-range fertile farm eggs were available from neighbors. Most of my foods were heavily salted or sugared, and we ate a great deal of fat in the form of lard. My mother had little money but she had no idea that some of the most nutritious foods are also the least expensive.

It is no surprise to me that considering her nutrient-poor, fat-laden diet and stressful life, my mother eventually developed severe gall bladder problems. Her degeneration caused progressively more and more severe pain until she had a cholecystectomy. The gallbladder's profound deterioration had damaged her liver as well, seeming to her surgeon to require the removal of half her liver. After this surgical insult

she had to stop working and never regained her health. Fortunately, by this time all her children were independent.

I had still more to overcome. My eldest brother had a nervous breakdown while working on the DEW Line (he was posted on the Arctic Circle watching radar screens for a possible incoming attack from Russia). I believe his collapse actually began with our childhood nutrition. While in the Arctic all his foods came from cans. He also was working long hours in extremely cramped quarters with no leave for months in a row, never going outside because of the cold, or having the benefit of natural daylight.

When he was still in the acute stage of his illness (I was still a teenager myself) I went to the hospital where my brother was being held, and talked the attending psychiatrist into immediately discharging him into my care. The physician also agreed to refrain from giving him electroshock therapy, a commonly used treatment for mental conditions in Canadian hospitals at that time. Somehow I knew the treatment they were using was wrong.

I brought my brother home still on heavy doses of thiorazine. The side effects of this drug were so severe he could barely exist: blurred vision, clenched jaw, trembling hands, and restless feet that could not be kept still. These are common problems with the older generation of psychotropic medications, generally controlled to some extent with still other drugs like cogentin (which he was taking too).

My brother steadily reduced his tranquilizers until he was able to think and do a few things. On his own he started taking a lot of B vitamins and eating whole grains. I do not know exactly why he did this, but I believe he was following his intuition. (I personally did not know enough to suggest a

natural approach at that time.) In any case after three months on vitamins and an improved diet he no longer needed any medication, and was delighted to be free of their side effects. He remained somewhat emotionally fragile for a few more months but he soon returned to work, and has had no mental trouble from that time to this day. This was the beginning of my interest in mental illness, and my first exposure to the limitations of 'modern' psychiatry.

I always preferred self-discipline to being directed by others. So I took every advantage of having a teacher for a mother and studied at home instead of being bored silly in a classroom. In Canada of that era you didn't have to go to high school to enter university, you only had to pass the written government entrance exams. At age 16, never having spent a single day in high school, I passed the university entrance exams with a grade of 97 percent. At that point in my life I really wanted to go to medical school and become a doctor, but I didn't have the financial backing to embark on such a long and costly course of study, so I settled on a four year nursing course at the University of Alberta, with all my expenses paid in exchange for work at the university teaching hospital.

At the start of my nurses training I was intensely curious about everything in the hospital: birth, death, surgery, illness, etc. I found most births to be joyful, at least when everything came out all right. Most people died very alone in the hospital, terrified if they were conscious, and all seemed totally unprepared for death, emotionally or spiritually. None of the hospital staff wanted to be with a dying person except me; most hospital staff were unable to confront death any more bravely than those who were dying. So I made it a point of being at the death bed. The doctors and nurses found

it extremely unpleasant to have to deal with the preparation of the dead body for the morgue; this chore usually fell to me also. I did not mind dead bodies. They certainly did not mind me!

I had the most difficulty accepting surgery. There were times when surgery was clearly a life saving intervention, particularly when the person had incurred a traumatic injury, but there were many other cases when, though the knife was the treatment of choice, the results were disastrous.

Whenever I think of surgery, my recollections always go to a man with cancer of the larynx. At that time the University of Alberta had the most respected surgeons and cancer specialists in the country. To treat cancer they invariably did surgery, plus radiation and chemotherapy to eradicate all traces of cancerous tissue in the body, but they seemed to forget there also was a human being residing in that very same cancerous body. This particularly unfortunate man came into our hospital as a whole human being, though sick with cancer. He could still speak, eat, swallow, and looked normal. But after surgery he had no larynx, nor esophagus, nor tongue, and no lower jaw.

The head surgeon, who, by the way, was considered to be a virtual god amongst gods, came back from the operating room smiling from ear to ear, announcing proudly that he had 'got all the cancer'. But when I saw the result I thought he'd done a butcher's job. The victim couldn't speak at all, nor eat except through a tube, and he looked grotesque. Worst, he had lost all will to live. I thought the man would have been much better off to keep his body parts as long as he could, and die a whole person able to speak, eating if he felt

like it, being with friends and family without inspiring a gasp of horror.

I was sure there must be better ways of dealing with degenerative conditions such as cancer, but I had no idea what they might be or how to find out. There was no literature on medical alternatives in the university library, and no one in the medical school ever hinted at the possibility except when the doctors took jabs at chiropractors. Since no one else viewed the situation as I did I started to think I might be in the wrong profession.

It also bothered me that patients were not respected, were not people; they were considered a "case" or a "condition." I was frequently reprimanded for wasting time talking to patients, trying to get acquainted. The only place in the hospital where human contact was acceptable was the psychiatric ward. So I enjoyed the rotation to psychiatry for that reason, and decided that I would like to make psychiatry or psychology my specialty.

By the time I finished nursing school, it was clear that the hospital was not for me. I especially didn't like its rigid hierarchical system, where all bowed down to the doctors. The very first week in school we were taught that when entering a elevator, make sure that the doctor entered first, then the intern, then the charge nurse. Followed by, in declining order of status: graduate nurses, third year nurses, second year nurses, first year nurses, then nursing aids, then orderlies, then ward clerks, and only then, the cleaning staff. No matter what the doctor said, the nurse was supposed to do it immediately without question--a very military sort of organization.