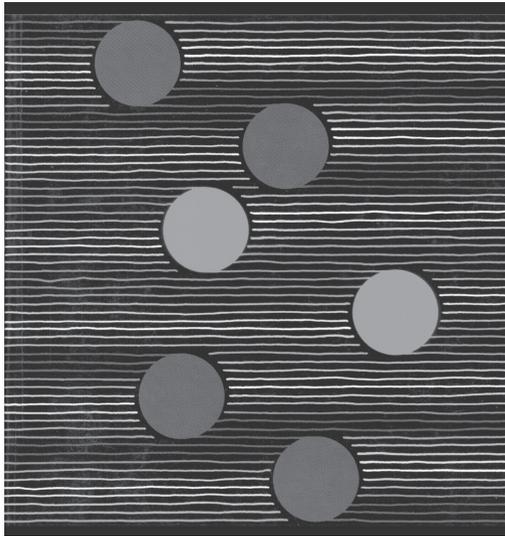


Basic Macrobiotics



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Acid and Alkaline

Basic Macrobiotics

Kaleidoscope

Learning from Salmon

Macrobiotics: An Invitation to Health and Happiness

Milk, A Myth of Civilization

Natural Healing from Head to Toe

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Preface

Translating George Ohsawa's writings and adding my own explanations, I wrote *Macrobiotics: An Invitation to Health and Happiness* in 1971. It was published by the George Ohsawa Macrobiotic Foundation in that year and has since been one of the best selling introductory books on macrobiotics. Due to new findings in many recent nutritional studies, ideas on diet in this country have been changing rapidly. The United States Senate's *Dietary Goals for the United States*, released in 1977, was an especially great step forward.

Acceptance of macrobiotics has surged since the publication of Dr. Anthony Sattilaro's story of his recovery from terminal cancer by following macrobiotic guidelines in the September 1980 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Many people now look at macrobiotics in a new light. Even doctors, in small but increasing numbers, are recommending macrobiotic or similar dietary practices to their patients and, in some cases, are following them themselves.

Many books on diet—including *Diet for a New America* by John Robbins, *Sugar Blues* by William Dufty, *Jane Brody's Nutrition Book* by Jane Brody, *Diet For A Small Planet* by Frances Moore Lappé, *Live Longer Now* by John N. Leonard, Jack L. Hofer and Nathan Pritikin—agree, and warn, that America's eating habits have gone farther and farther astray, especially in eating too much food derived from animals. Much recent research shows that plant sources of nutrition are more suitable for humans than animal sources, especially when various whole grains, vegetables, beans, and sea vegetables are combined in one's diet.

As a result, macrobiotics, which not only agrees with this new

information but also offers a philosophical explanation of why it is accurate, is now becoming quite popular. The new willingness, even eagerness, of the general public to learn and change prompted me to write this book. There is an obvious need for an introductory book written for those who have never heard of macrobiotics, yin, or yang. In this book then, I try to explain basic macrobiotics—so simple and so understandable—for everyone.

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Introduction

In 1985, Americans spent \$1,051 per person for medical care, which amounts to a total personal health care bill of \$259.4 billion. When the \$709 per person spent by public institutions is added, the total national health expenditure for 1985 was \$434.5 billion, or 10.8 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) for that year. Why must we spend so much money for sickness? Don't these figures suggest that something is wrong?

What is even more revealing is the rate at which these figures are increasing. By 1993, personal health expenses rose to \$496.4 billion, and the total national health expenditure was \$884.2 billion or more than \$3,200 per American. This means that the total private and public health costs more than doubled in an eight-year period. Even after taking inflation into account, these figures are much too large and growing far too rapidly to belong to a healthy and happy country. More to the point, in spite of all the money spent on "health care," nearly two million people died of sickness in 1993. Heart disease accounted for the highest percentage of these deaths, and cancer followed in second place.

According to a 1992 American Heart Association report, 59 million Americans, or one in four, currently have one or more forms of heart and/or blood vessel disease. As many as 1.5 million Americans are expected to have a heart attack this year (1993), and, at this moment, millions of American adults are walking around with high blood pressure. The amount of money spent for cardiovascular disease alone continues to increase each year.

Of the main disease classifications, heart disease currently has

the highest death rate, claiming almost half of the yearly deaths in America. However, cancer is the disease that people fear most. Heart disease is beginning to respond to a limited, but growing, awareness among the medical profession regarding the effects of a sound diet and exercise, but not cancer. Cancer seems unpredictable. Modern medicine doesn't know who its victim will be, when it will attack, or how it will develop. It is obvious that the medical profession doesn't know how to stop cancer's growth nor effect its cure. For our scientists and physicians, cancer is still a mystery.

A person who is diagnosed with cancer today is in a position similar to a primitive man who has been cursed by devils, and the various cancer treatments he or she will undergo are similarly primitive. Cutting, burning, and poisoning are the present alternatives, and they are so dangerous that a patient often dies from the treatment instead of from the cancer. Four recent presidents of the Japanese Cancer Institute have died from cancer following conventional treatment. This goes a long way in showing that the current cancer "cures" are not particularly effective.

Cancer is epidemic today. Statistics reveal that one out of four Americans currently has some form of cancer. Because it sometimes takes 25 years or longer before diagnosable cancer symptoms appear, many of us may have cancer at this moment without realizing it. According to reports of the American Cancer Society, one of every two males and one out of every three females will face a cancer diagnosis sooner or later. Worse, this rate will continue to increase until the factors that are causing it are halted.

According to the same reports, in 1983 alone, 855,000 Americans were diagnosed as having cancer, and this figure did not include non-melanoma skin cancers and carcinomas. From this figure, three people out of eight, or 320,000, were predicted to be alive in 1988. This is a 38 percent survival rate. Normal life expectancy suggests that 46 percent will survive over the same five years, so medical professionals say their patient's five-year survival rate is fifty-fifty with conventional treatments.

However, this figure is misleading in that these treatments are

only symptomatic and do not cure the underlying cause. Following treatment, all too frequently a second cancer develops several years later. This time the cancer often scatters to various sites around the body, so that even surgery is no longer possible. As a last resort most of these people receive chemotherapy, which is the introduction of strong poisons into the body in the hopes of killing the cancer cells. The problem is that these chemicals do not fully discriminate between cancerous and normal cells, and so many healthy cells are also destroyed. Headache, severe pain, nausea, loss of hair, anemia, and extreme weakness are common side effects.

Chemotherapy patients often become so weak that they cannot even stand up straight. Most cancer patients die after this second cancer develops. What it seems we can expect from conventional cancer treatment then is a prolongation of life for about five years, with a great deal of pain, agony, and fear. This is not health or happiness; it is like being sentenced to hell.

Why has this happened? What is it about our modern way of life that is causing such diseases and treatment? We are approaching a crisis that is extraordinary and without precedent in the history of humankind. I feel civilization has advanced too rapidly and materialistically, disregarding or forgetting our accumulated heritage of traditional wisdom. Humanity is literally on the verge of being destroyed by the two deadliest products of modern civilization—cancer and nuclear war. What is the cause of this disaster? What is the real cause of cancer?

In October of 1982, in unrelated incidents, seven people took the painkilling drug Tylenol and died from cyanide poisoning. The individual responsible has not been found. But who is the real criminal? Most people would say that obviously it is the person who put the cyanide into the capsules . . . I wonder. In my opinion, one who takes drugs whenever he feels discomfort is a criminal. Why? When we have pain, something is wrong; often it's poor blood circulation, whose root cause is an imbalance in our food intake. Pain is simply the body's way of warning us of a developing problem. It is then up to us to find the underlying cause and correct it. Taking drugs to

alleviate pain is symptomatic and temporary, and does not cure the problem by any means. But even worse, pain killers not only stop the pain and cover-up the problem, they also halt the body's natural healing processes. As just one example, antihistamines or other drugs are commonly taken to dry up a running nose. What most people do not realize is that a running nose is caused by the body's natural discharging system hard at work throwing off excesses and toxins.

When drugs interrupt the body's curing processes, which we see outwardly as symptoms, very dangerous things start to happen. Wastes and toxic materials generated internally or consumed in the form of impure food, air, and water start to be stored in various tissues and organs. This is a natural attempt by the body to localize poisons where they'll do the least damage. Unfortunately, after years of continual storage these "dump sites" fill to overflowing, polluting the whole body and inciting the growth of cancerous cells.

It is foolish and dangerous to spend \$1 billion a year for cough and cold medications, and \$1.2 billion yearly for internal pain killers, so that we can cover up our discomfort while we accumulate poisons in our systems. This buildup of waste, and the body's polluted internal environment that results, is the main cause of cancer. Thus, the mentality that tries to stop discomfort at any cost, never bothering to question how or why it developed, is the true cause of cancer.

Therefore, the first, hardest, and most important step in curing cancer or any other illness, whether it manifests physically or mentally, is to reflect deeply on what you've done to cause the condition and take responsibility for it. Then you must correct your mistakes, which represent a failure to achieve balance in the various areas of your life. Food, being dense and material, quickly and directly affects the physical body when intake is not balanced. This is why a balanced, macrobiotic way of eating has a profound and rapid effect on the condition of the body.

If you eat natural foods in a balanced way, pain will very often subside in two to three weeks—even severe cancer pains. In my experience with people that have cancer and other painful conditions,

pain almost always stops within three weeks, and sometimes within days.

I have witnessed many people with terminal cancer, severe arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other problems improve by observing a simple, balanced way of eating, which eventually leads to a more balanced and joyful life. This is truly a miracle. In reality, however, just living is even more of a miracle, and the secret of this miracle lies largely in the foods one chooses to eat. When eating properly, the miracle continues. But if one eats too much poor quality or non-foods—such as processed, refined, chemicalized, fatty, or sugary foods—life often comes to a sad and painful end.

The manifestation of this miracle of life is health in our bodies and happiness in our minds. We were born to be healthy and happy, not sick and unhappy. This is our God-given birthright. Of course, food is not the only consideration, but the foundation of health and happiness lies in giving our bodies suitable foods in balance. Applying the principles underlying this balance to our diets and lifestyle has been named “macrobiotics.” To be deeply happy is the ultimate aim of balanced living.

George Ohsawa once said, “It seems to me that man’s ultimate desire is happiness. I rarely find a person, however, whose life is really happy. Most live in discontent, fear, and despair. Even a happy person rarely remains so more than a year or two without having a car accident, divorce, separation, heart attack, cancer, etc. If he is happy for ten years, he should be kept in a museum because such a person is nearly extinct in our society.”

Were we born in this world to suffer and to spend a miserable, unhappy seventy or eighty years? How pathetic we are, even if we spend a small percentage of our precious lives in fear and insecurity, agony and sadness!

In this book, I introduce practical guidelines that can lead one to a joyous, happy, and wonderful life. The diet and philosophy based on these principles were a basic part of all major religions until the science and technology of our modern civilization overshadowed the usefulness of traditional practices. Modern knowledge is of course

important, but it must be balanced with traditional wisdom or we lose our roots and become disconnected from our true human nature.

My aim in writing this book has been to introduce you to the way of selecting and preparing foods that will eventually lead to true, unending happiness in the simplest way possible. I would be happy to receive any comments, criticisms, or advice that you may have after reading this book.

Macrobiotic View of Health and Sickness

Real Health

In 1941, the year Japan entered World War II, George Ohsawa wrote a book called *Standing on the Front Line of the Health War*, in which he compared the health of the American, German, English, and Japanese people. This book was meant to be a warning to the Japanese military government that Japan would be defeated, due to its failing health, if the people did not halt the increasing use of a modern diet and return to a more traditional way of eating. On the inside front cover of this book, Ohsawa correctly predicted that Japanese military leaders would eventually be prosecuted as war criminals.

Ohsawa was not merely a prophet, however. He was dedicated to showing people how to improve their health, and thus their lives, by using the basic principles of macrobiotics. He compiled a definition of health during the time he worked at *Shoku-Yo-Kai* (macrobiotic association). In the appendix of *Standing on the Front Line of the Health War*, he wrote his six conditions of real health:

Physical conditions:

1. Never exhausted; never catches cold. Always ready to work.
2. Good appetite. Happy with the simplest foods.
3. Good, deep sleep. Falls asleep within three minutes after going to bed and wakes up after four to five hours.