



Lisa Oz

says she acquired her background in wellness and integrative medicine genetically. Her father is a cardiac surgeon and her progressive mother treated Oz's childhood ailments with homeopathic remedies and transformed her family's eating habits by becoming a vegetarian.

Today, Oz is the wife of "America's Doctor," world-renowned cardiac surgeon Mehmet Oz, MD, and a mother of four, who is passing her knowledge of healthy living along to her own family — and audiences nationwide. She is co-author of several books in her husband's famed YOU series and the popular Healing from the Heart, which addresses

combining Eastern and Western traditions to create the medicine of the future. Oz is also a Reiki master and has spoken widely on her insights into health and energy medicine.

On May 12 she was the keynote speaker at a fundraising luncheon for Bastyr University, where she discussed steps Americans can take to make wellness the alternative to our current health care crisis. Before the event, she sat down for an interview with Bastyr Magazine to talk about wellness, the future of integrative medicine and how she introduced "America's Doctor" to health habits that have changed his life — and the lives of his patients.

How has your background in wellness and integrative medicine become a part of the lives of your husband and your family?

My husband wasn't an easy sell. He's open-minded, but he's also a scientist so he needed empirical evidence. For example, one day, he came home sore after working out and I massaged just one side of his body with arnica to prove that it worked. The next day, he was begging for more.

He saw that allopathic medicine wasn't providing everything that his patients needed, and when he found that complementary medicine worked for him, he started introducing it to his patients.

When treating our children at home, we use more complementary than allopathic remedies. We are much more likely to reach for herbal or homeopathic remedies before giving our children antibiotics or ibuprofen.

One alternative to the health care crisis is a healthier population. Wellness is a fundamental change in approach. How do we move in that direction?

I think the most important thing we need to do as a population is to realize that our health care is not exclusively in our physicians' hands. Health is not something that our physicians create for us. Wellness is something that we work toward in conjunction with our doctors — but ultimately, the responsibility is up to us. Americans need to recognize that everything from lifestyle and nutrition to stress impact our health.

What do you think the future of medicine will look like? Do you think medicine will continue to become more integrative?

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medical industry in the direction we want it to go — and not let it be driven by financial interests.

There has been an increased awareness surrounding integrative medicine. It is a multi-billion dollar industry and where there is money there is a market. It is also effective. The practitioners in integrative medicine need to continue to do research and compile scientific data. The more we prove its effectiveness — the more it will be readily embraced by the allopathic medical community.

Is there a particular component of Eastern medicine that you think deserves more recognition and acceptance as we move toward an integrative health care model?

The view of the body as an energetic entity. The field of Western medicine is stuck in the mechanistic view, while other areas of science and physics have moved on to understand the role of energy in the universe. I don't think Western medicine has made that leap. Eastern medicine has embraced the power of energy for thousands of years, and this is where I think we need to look more closely at Eastern paradigms.

Can you offer some advice to encourage our readers to integrate mind, body and spirit into their daily lives?

The most important thing you can do is be conscious of your choices — no matter what they are. Whatever you do, do it with awareness and take notice of the choices you are making and the impact they have on you, those around you and society as a whole. The best way to focus on your health is to bring your mindfulness to your physical body by being mindful of the choices you are making for your body.

Can you tell our readers about the best of Eastern and Western therapies to empower them to

partner with their doctors for optimal health?

There is not one therapy that works for everyone. Whatever modality you choose, be mindful and aware of its effects on your body and communicate that to your physician. It is important to keep an open dialogue with your physician — if you want to use complementary and alternative therapies, you need to maintain an open, trusting relationship with your physician.

In your opinion, what are the skills needed by our graduates to become "future leaders in transforming the health and well-being of the human community?"

Skills are something that are taught. You can be a skilled acupuncturist, therapist or cardiac surgeon. It is important to be highly trained in your field, but there are qualities that Bastyr graduates need to have in order to be leaders, and the most important of those is compassion. First and foremost, your graduates are healers and if they aren't compassionate they won't be a good healers. Secondly, graduates must be curious, open-minded and willing to try new therapies to benefit their patients. Lastly, they must have a lot of energy. As a healer, you always give a lot of yourself and that can be draining. In order to be a leader, you have to have a great resource of energy so you can pour yourselves out for others.

What are the steps a university like Bastyr needs to take to become the world's leading academic center for advancing and integrating knowledge in the natural health arts and sciences?

In my opinion, it is important to continue to do research, publish the results and get the scientific data out there. It is the only way these modalities will be taken seriously by the medical establishment, but also by the public — because many people are very influenced by their physicians.

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