

Back to the Basics

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In the past month there have been tremendous amounts of tumult in the world, from hurricanes along the shores of Texas, Florida and the Caribbean islands, to earthquakes in Mexico, and fires throughout the Western United States. Many of you now reading may have been affected by these natural disasters. Many of us have been and are praying for your relief. Many are serving to rebuild what has been lost. This has set some thoughts in motion for me regarding what you may need to hear, what we all need to hear about things that have been lost or taken. Devastation, difficulty, challenges and heartbreak happen to us all in some degree or another that influences our



well-being. In a popular TV series, *Once Upon a Time*, the beloved Prince Charming says, “Darkness never wins. It just fools you into thinking it does.” Darkness and despair keep us from moving forward. The truth is we all have control of our circumstances to an extent. We can choose to act and have hope. One of the ways we can do this is by getting *back to the basics* by taking inventory of our needs. It’s all the little things we take for granted that matter. In Abraham Maslow’s *Hierarchy of Needs* triangle from 1943, he states that people have certain needs that must be fulfilled in order to reach one’s full potential. The base of the triangle holds our most vital physiological needs; food, warmth, water, and rest. This is followed by safety and security. If we do not have these, we are held back from reaching our full potential. Once our basic needs are met, then we must feed our soul’s need for belonging and love, then prestige and accomplishment. Ultimately when these are secured, we are able to reach our full potential and ability to create. I would like to focus on the basics at the bottom of the triangle; food, warmth, water, rest, security and safety.

Water- The [United States Geological Survey](#) says our bodies are made of up to 60% water and it is vital for many bodily functions. Some of these vital functions are; to help the brain manufacture hormones and neurotransmitters, regulate body temperature, act as a shock absorber for the brain and spinal cord, convert food to components needed for survival-digestion, help deliver oxygen all over the body, lubricate joints, flush body waste-urine, allow body cells to grow, keep mucosal membranes moist, and form saliva to aid our digestion. It’s time to set down sodas and sugar laden drinks, and fill our bodies with pure, simple water. An adult’s daily water intake is about 12-16 cups a day. To calculate a child’s water intake, [click here](#). For an interesting read try, [The Choice is Clear](#), by Dr. Allen Banik.

Food- Times have changed. It is now more expensive to eat fresh, wholesome foods. Our cheap fast foods are overly processed and heavy laden with contaminants and preservatives. Precious vitamins and minerals are lost which they try to add with synthetic versions, aka “fortified.” Our bodies require macronutrients with essential vitamins and minerals. These macronutrients are carbohydrates, fats and proteins. Plants are endowed with these macronutrients, vitamins, minerals and fiber inherently. Research has shown health risks associated with high consumption of [animal products](#) and overly processed foods. They lack fiber and nutrients that slow the body’s healing process. If you choose to consume animal and processed products, do so sparingly. We can get all the nutrients we need, even calcium and protein, on a plant based diet. Here are three books I recommend that support this idea; [The China Study](#), by T. Colin and Thomas M. Campbell, [Eat to Live](#), by Joel Fuhman, and [Thrive](#), by Brendan Brazier. It can be simple. Leonardo Di Vinci said, “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.” Simplify your meals. An array of cut up fruits and veggies, a simple baked potato or whole grains, nuts, and seeds is both nourishing and satisfying. This simplicity will ease stress that comes from making complicated meals that may not be appreciated. Spending a little extra money towards your health will pay future dividends. Here are links to [Dr. Christopher’s Mucusless Diet](#) and [recipes](#) at Herbal Legacy.

Rest-Many of us try to cut our sleep time to accommodate life’s demands. We think sleep is a luxury. It is *not* a luxury, but is vital for our physical and mental health. Insufficient rest affects how our brain processes and ages; weakens our immune system; increases risk of anxiety and depression, and [affects our weight](#). Lack of sleep shifts ghrelin and leptin, two appetite regulating hormones, which can cause us to overeat. [For sleep](#), an average adult should get 7-9 hours and children, 9-11 hours a night. Having trouble sleeping? Try these herbs: Valerian, Hops, Passion Flower or Lavender.

Security and Safety- [The Declaration of Independence](#) for the United States says that *all men have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*. It is important that we treat others with civility and respect, especially our children. We all deserve that same treatment. If you are in need of temporary aid, there are shelters and assistance provided by many services. This [database](#) can search locations near you. Deepak Chopra has said, “No matter how much it gets abused, the body can restore balance.” As we face challenges or wonder why we are not getting better, let’s go back to the basics and make sure our needs are being met.

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