

## Using Herbs with Confidence Part II

Last month, I told about discovery that I had lymphoma. Here, I want to talk about some of the things that we noticed and experienced that helped us have confidence along the journey that things were working. One of the most encouraging teachings of the late Dr. Christopher is that when the body has what it needs to heal the severity of symptoms and discomfort are reduced significantly. If a treatment is ineffective, the symptoms remain the same or worsen.

The first change that was most beneficial was getting sufficient sleep. Science, common sense, and good health dictate getting enough rest. There are also hormonal considerations, since lack of sleep disrupts the delicate balance of hormones such as cortisol, serotonin, human growth hormone, etc. We can't expect our bodies to heal themselves or function properly on too little sleep. This was probably the simplest (though not necessarily the easiest) of the interventions. The next remedy was Essiac Tea each morning and night. We prepared the tea in relatively large batches of about a quart every 2 to 3 weeks. I took detox baths every 2 or 3 days with Epsom salts and a combination of hot yarrow and peppermint tea. Every day, I dry brushed to help encourage the flow of lymph and improve circulation. After each bath, I rinsed with apple cider vinegar and cold water, followed by a "three oil massage" oil or coconut oil with frankincense essential oil. After regular detox baths, the recurrent night sweats stopped. This was one of the first evidences that what I was doing was helping.

Next, I juiced several times a day. Juices included carrots, apples, celery, turmeric, ginger, and other seasonal fruits and vegetables in various combinations. As mentioned, in my case, the lymphoma brought with it recurrent shingles. The discomfort from postherpetic neuralgia was severe. After regular juicing, the postherpetic neuralgia was more bearable and after a few months the shingles stopped recurring altogether.

I ate lots of raw, living foods and increased the number of fermented foods such as homemade Kefir soda, miso, and home fermented vegetables. I took a daily honey and apple cider vinegar tonic with cayenne. In addition to these, I took more than 50 herbs in various combinations. This included Dr. Christopher's formulas: Complete Tissue and Bone, Red Clover Combination, Lower Bowel formula, Liver and Gallbladder, Kidney Formula, Hormonal Changease, Relax-eze and the Ear and Nerve formula. I took Vitalerbs and various adaptogenic herbs to regulate my body systems and its ability to heal. I used an alkalizing juice blend (with juices and herbs) that aided in detoxifying, especially from possible heavy metals.

I knew the additional nutrients from juicing and the purifying and building components of the herbs were working, but wanted to ensure that my lifestyle was optimal for healing. I tried to see some stress as positive and necessary for life and get rid of the "excess" in my life. I practiced mindfulness and meditation. I sunbathed frequently and hiked often. I felt happy and re-energized immediately after I was able to sit on a rock and soak up some sun. I tried other "alternative" therapies. There were some that didn't "resonate" with me and several that felt helpful but would have been overwhelming had we continued all of them. We did what we felt was most important in the moments and from day to day, and occasionally those would change.

It's always easier after the fact to look back and say that one made the correct choices. Healing begins the moment the body has what it needs. Symptoms steadily improve and joy returns to the journey. This was our family's journey, and we have no regrets. There are those who call what happened "spontaneous remission". Our so-called "treatments" are, after all, not FDA approved. I don't claim to have the answers or the cure; to be sure, my journey is not yours, but I hope sharing it with you will help you feel a little more confident in owning your story and your situation and doing what you feel is best on your own healing journey.