

Chapter 10

Healing Options

Announce, Plan, and Remind

- Announcements
 - [announcements in here as needed]
- Reminder
 - [reminder in here as needed]
- Today's plan
 - Chapter 10: Complementary and Alternative Medicine
 - Activity: career change!

Lecture Outline

- Complementary and Alternative Medicine
- Osteopaths
- Chiropractors
- Faith Healing and Religion
- Folk Healing
 - African American Folk Healers
 - Curanderismo Healing
 - Native American Healing

Ask, Think, and Talk

- Before this week's lecture and readings...
 - what forms of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) were you familiar with?
 - what purpose did they serve?
 - what are your thoughts on them?

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

- The use of treatments that are not commonly practiced by the medical profession:
 - Chiropractors
 - Faith healers
 - Folk healers
 - Acupuncturists
 - Homeopaths
 - Naturopaths
 - Use of dietary supplements
 - Biofeedback
 - ... and more!

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

- Little sociological research has been conducted on these phenomena
 - Persons who use some form of alternative or “new age” medicine tend to have middle- or working-class social backgrounds
 - Those who use faith and folk healers typically come from a lower-class background and use these practitioners because they are inexpensive and culturally similar

Osteopaths

- 19 osteopathic colleges in the U.S.
 - Doctor of Osteopathy degree (D.O.)
- 61,000 licensed osteopaths in the U.S. in 2007
- Osteopaths have been able to maintain their separate identity, yet the trend is toward absorption into medicine
 - Recognized as a medical specialty in 1953 by the AMA
 - Can specialize in a number of branches, such as surgery, pediatrics, and radiology

Osteopaths

- Today, osteopaths are part of mainstream medicine, and they work as physicians with the added skill of training in spinal procedures
- Osteopaths achieved professional respectability by moving away from an exclusive focus on spinal manipulation techniques to treat general health problems

Chiropractors

- Like osteopaths, the chiropractic approach to healing also involves manipulation of bones in the spinal column
- 17 chiropractic colleges in the U.S.
 - No internships or residencies to serve
- Licensed to practice in all 50 states and are authorized to receive Medicare payments
- Over 67,000 chiropractors in the U.S.

Chiropractors

- The medical profession has traditionally opposed the extension of professional status to chiropractors
- Conflicts within the occupation over appropriate role, and little control over who may be licensed for practice
- Patients tend to use both chiropractors and physicians in a complementary manner to treat their problems

Medicaid Coverage of CAM

- % of Medicaid programs reimbursing for CAM:
 - Chiropractic by 33 programs (71.7%)
 - Biofeedback by 10 programs (21.7%)
 - Acupuncture by 7 programs (15.2%)
 - Hypnotherapy and naturopathy by 5 programs each (10.8%)
- Steyer TE, Freed GL, Lantz PM. Medicaid reimbursement for alternative therapies. *Altern Ther Health Med.* 2002;8(6):84-88.

Ask, Think, and Talk

- What are some pros to insurance covering CAM?
- What are some cons?
- Why do you think that some CAM practitioners have more legitimacy in the medical profession, e.g. osteopaths vs. chiropractors?

Faith Healing and Religion

- Faith healers are people who use the power of suggestion, prayer, and faith in God to promote healing
 - E.g., the belief in divine healing in Pentecostal churches
- Unclear whether and how faith healing works
 - Alleviation of symptoms
 - Relief from psychological distress
 - Acceptance of one's health or life situation
 - Redefining ailments as less serious or less medical

Faith Healing and Religion

- Five general categories:
 1. Self-treatment through prayer
 2. Treatment by a layperson thought to be able to communicate with God
 3. Treatment by an official church leader as one of their duties
 4. Healing obtained from a person or group who practice healing full time without an affiliation with a major religious organization
 5. Healing obtained from religious healers who practice full time and are affiliated with a major religious group

Faith Healing and Religion

- Most religious groups favor a combination of religious practices and professional medical care in treating health problems
 - E.g., Pentecostal churches
- The doctrines of a few religious groups prohibit their members from seeking modern medical treatment.
 - E.g., Christian Science Church
 - Controversial when concerning children's rights to medical treatment against parents' religious beliefs

Faith Healing and Religion

- Religion is associated with positive levels of health and lower mortality
 - Influence on health risk behaviors
 - Promotes good health through encouraging positive health lifestyles practices and discouraging harmful habits like drinking and smoking
 - Provides comfort and social support in times of stress

Folk Healing

- Not used to any significant extent in the U.S.
- Still used by some low-income and minority populations
- Folk practices have persisted in modern societies largely because of dissatisfaction with professional medicine and a cultural gap between biomedical practitioners and particular patients

Folk Healing: African-American

- Belief system does not differentiate between science and religion
 - Life is generally good or bad and a cure for one problem may cure multiple problems
 - Emphasizes the cause of problems rather than symptoms
 - Distinguishes between natural illnesses (which may be divine and requires repentance) or unnatural illnesses caused by evil influences or magic

Folk Healing: Curanderismo

- Curanderos and curanderas are Mexican American folk healers
- Like Black folk healers, they blend religion and medicine into a single approach, emphasize cause of disorders rather than symptoms, and do not distinguish natural from supernatural
- Employs prayer and religious counseling alongside a variety of folk drugs and herbs

Folk Healing: Native Americans

- Navajos
 - Traditional rituals may last several days, lead by a singer
 - Illness is seen as caused by soul loss, witchcraft, spirit possession, or violations of tribal taboos
 - Emphasis on cause of illness, diseases classified by causes rather than symptoms
 - Practices declining because fewer men trained as singers, long ceremonies are increasingly difficult to afford

Folk Healing

- Often employed in addition to doctor visits, and it is not clear how effective these methods are as treatment
- Do appear to reduce the anxieties of their clients, and they are most effective in dealing with health problems that have some emotional basis
- Emphasis on *causes* of disease and holistic treatment

Ask, Think, and Talk

- Consider the major theoretical differences between modern scientific medicine and folk medicine or CAM:
 - Modern medicine: highly specialized, sophisticated, using pharmacology to treat symptoms
 - Folk medicine/CAM: holistic or “whole body”, focusing on causes and holistic treatments
- Do you think that there is a place for both modern medicine and CAM in the healthcare experience?

Activity: Finding a New Job!

- **Activity objectives:** The objective of this activity is to explore the different alternative medicine practitioners, and learn about their techniques, their contributions, and the criticisms they face.
- **Job change!** After last week's allergy drug "Individulair" was found to be causing our patients to develop psychiatric problems, we will be looking for a new job this week. Either as individuals or in small groups of 2-3, pick one occupation from this list and research the questions below:
 - Acupuncturist
 - Aromatherapist
 - Biofeedback therapist
 - Chiropractor
 - Doula (childbirth companion)
 - Herbalist
 - Hypnotist
 - Massage therapist
 - Meditation teacher
 - Naturopathic Doctor (ND)
 - Reiki practitioner (energy healing)
 - Yoga teacher

Activity: Finding a New Job!

- **Questions:**
 - What education does your job require? Where would you go to school?
 - What symptoms or conditions does your therapy seek to treat? What does your patient population look like?
 - Describe what you actually do. What does an appointment or session look like at your practice? What kinds of products do you prescribe?
 - What do those who have benefited from your therapy say?
 - What do those who criticize your discipline say?
 - How do you feel about your job? Do you think you would visit this kind of provider for your own treatment?
- Then, as a class, discuss your findings.