

What has Dr. Shook been reading?
8 Weeks to Optimum Health
By Andrew Weil M.D.

Dr. Weil's book 8 Weeks to Optimum health is a great book.

Why 8 weeks? Well really it's about a commitment to a healthy lifestyle and it takes time for new patterns and habits to be established. Dr. Weil has set his program up for me, and you the reader, to make gradual changes over an 8-week period. If he insisted all the changes occur NOW, people would no doubt say "... yea right" then go back to eating cheese puffs and cruz'n the net.

Dr. Weil is gentle and understanding with his requests and starts by going through the kitchen cupboards and the refrigerator, throwing out all "foods" containing rancid or hydrogenated oils and all products with artificial sweeteners and colors. He is very thorough in his explanation of why and how some things are good for you and some things are bad. You might want to have a dictionary on hand also a little background in chemistry might be useful.

I grooved on Dr. Weil's definition of HEALTH. "Health, is wholeness and balance, an inner resilience that allows you to meet the demands of living without being overwhelmed..." He goes on to describe the body's Healing System (a concept of Eastern Medicine), which depends on the proper operation of all the body's structural components (a concept of Western Medicine), to reestablish a balanced state once something is out of whack (for example, the attack of a flu bug). For this Healing System to work it requires the optimal functioning of the structural components. Unfortunately, the American lifestyle (Processed fast food, stress, toxins, couch potato'ness) can be hard on these structural components, making it hard for them to work at their best, leading to the blockage of the Healing System and the persistence of illness.

In other words, if you don't take care of your body, your body can't take care of you.

Some of the changes Dr. Weil recommends are walking, eating vegetables, drinking clean water, taking vitamin C, reducing the consumption of animal fat, breathing exercises, listening to music and looking at fresh flowers. I personally was not thrilled at the idea of fasting but some people really dig it and the program is flexible.

Towards the back of the book he discusses how the program might be modified for men, women, those over 50, those over 70, pregnant women, travelers, big city dwellers, those with small children, those who are overweight and those at risk of heart disease or cancer.

His book is liberally sprinkled with healing stories from people who have benefited from his program.

I found myself making a new commitment to my own wellness and health. Can you hear the crunch of broccoli over the tapping of my fingers on the keyboard?

This is an excellent book and would be a fine addition to any home library.

Try it -- give it the 8 weeks --you'll be delighted.

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