

# THE 7 PILLARS OF HEALTH

## A PARADIGM SHIFT IN MEDICINE



- NUTRITION 
- GASTROINTESTINAL RESTORATION 
- DETOXIFICATION 
- THE NERVOUS SYSTEM 
- HORMONES 
- FITNESS AND EXERCISE 
- EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH 



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# A Rude Awakening



## **How did we get here?**

Many pet parents experience a rude awakening when their animals are “suddenly” very sick. What’s even worse is when they can’t get answers from their veterinarians and much less any suggestions on how to turn their beloved companion’s health around.

So, what is one to do?

**Allow me to tell you a bit about my story before we dive in. Bear with me. I will make sense.**

When people ask me how I got into holistic veterinary medicine, I always tell them that I was born weird and only became weirder. That always gets a little chuckle out of people! Mind you, I hated being different from others when I was young. Now I’m very grateful to be me, because not fitting in drove me to think outside the box and learn what I did and still do.

The weirdest thing, in my opinion, is that I didn’t really like animals much as a kid. It was always my sister who would bring home cats, guinea pigs and rabbits. She was the one who took it to the extreme by importing turtles from Spain – most likely not quite legal – and then proceeded to house them in her room. Despite closed doors, the malodorous smell permeated the house. Long story short, they found a much better home.

My sister was also the one who dragged me to a nearby horse barn and convinced me to spend my Christmas money on lessons. Intuitively she must have known better what I needed, because she dragged me kicking and complaining. Once there, my love for horses was born instantly and the rest is history.



But my sister wasn't the only one who nurtured my yet to be discovered love for all living beings including our planet. My parents made me go on hikes, study plants (picture me rolling my eyes), eat left overs and recycle. Oh, the pleasure!

Years later, after much rebellion, I turned into my parents!

Thankfully, my mother's weirdness rubbed up on me and showed me a way of approaching life that would come in very handy. A "weirdness" I'm very proud of.

## **My Health Went Down the Drain**

Fast forward... Even though my upbringing was nature and health oriented and my questioning-everything attitude was in full bloom, I ended up suffering from major health issues.

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome kept me tied to my sofa, which sadly became my best friend for almost a decade. I'll spare you the boring details but will say that I didn't enjoy my life much back then.

Being a prisoner in my "dying" body – that's what it felt like – didn't keep me from fighting and searching. Something inside kept pushing me to cure myself. My survival instinct was strong and tenacious. I read books, researched and tried many healing modalities. I also turned my psyche upside down to try to unravel the mystery of my affliction. I left no stone unturned and tried everything that promised just a glimmer of hope.

*Eventually, I found the answers and that's what I want to share with you. Because it is this revelation that has helped hundreds of my animal patients live a healthier and longer life AND it's what we need to heal our diseased world.*





# THE CRISIS AND THE SOLUTION

We are very obviously in a serious crisis health wise. And by “we” I mean our animals, us humans and the entire planet. We need a solution to all of our pain and we need it NOW!

This urgency, driven by rapidly declining pet health pets combined with the serious lack of available veterinary care - much less holistic care - has many pet parents in a state of total panic.

Seeing this first hand is heartbreaking and has pushed me to creating a program that provides a solution. And that's how my **Holistic Pet Health & Longevity Method** program was born.

But I don't want you to have to wait one more minute and am going to share the solution with you in just a minute!





## What Have We Done?

To know what we're trying to solve we have to examine the problem and do some diagnostics if you will.

We are at the brink of extinction, with only 60 years' worth of farmable soil left. Let that sink in for a second. That's 2-3 generations and it will likely significantly affect us all in the immediate future.

- Some 3.5 trillion dollars are spent on chronic diseases each year.
- We've lost about forty percent of biodiversity in just the past fifty years.
- We're losing one species every twenty minutes.
- Bees are threatened by extinction and without them it is estimated that we will only survive for about three years.

One single spraying of Glyphosate kills about 50% of earth worms. That same chemical wreaks absolute havoc in all of our bodies including our ability to detoxify. Glyphosate alone has the potential of terminating life as we know it. It's currently found in nearly 70-90 % of all air and water samples.

But this is all excellent and brings me a lot of joy!

WHAT??? Now you probably think I've completely lost my mind ... LOL.

That may very well be, but maybe I've just lost the "mind" that is narrow, unyielding, stuck in its ways and simply the expression of survival fear (though I still have plenty of the latter).

I'm certainly not trying to make light of the situation and the tremendous hardships and challenges many people are facing. On the contrary. My heart goes out to everyone.

But let us be very honest for a minute. This situation we're in, we created it! We made a huge mess that is now forcing us all to reevaluate and change (ah..."change" the dreaded work humans hate and yet it's the only certainty!).





That's where joy can sneak in. Because we are pinned against the wall.

***WE ALL have this huge opportunity to create something new, different and much better. We have the chance to turn things around, because we have reached critical “mass”. The stone is rolling down the hill even though it may seem that we're in an uphill battle – not unlike Sisyphus who kept trying to get his rock to the top of the mountain.***

You will notice that I use “animals” and “we” interchangeably. There is very little difference between animals and humans when it comes to the principles of health and disease. Much of what I'm sharing with you goes for you just as much as for your furry companions.

But no worries, I'm still all about animals, but this is also about you, all wild animals, insects, microbes and plants. It's about our air, our water and our sanity.

This planet is supposed to be paradise. I'm reminded of it every spring when nature comes out of hibernation. We are all supposed to be happy and healthy, enjoy the beauty, and love and be loved.





# WHY?

“Why” what?

This is the most important question we can ask. This is the starting point!

Why is your animal sick?

There is always a reason for your animal’s state of health.

"Why" is the most important question to ask. Children ask this question all the time.

Why do we ask “why” when our car breaks down, but we don’t ask “why” when our animals’ or our own bodies don’t work as they should?

Why do our animals have so many illnesses? Why are they skyrocketing? Why do we have an epidemic of chronic disease? Why is does our animals’ life span decrease by 10% with every passing decade?

- Obesity
- Allergies
- Cancer
- Digestive problems
- Anxiety
- Arthritis
- Recurrent infections

*Now more than ever in the history of our current era are we suffering from epic numbers of illness – not just our animals!*





## Enter the Solution

Now that we've touched on the crisis and asked "why", we need to dive into the "how".

Like everyone else I too was pinned against the wall recently! I suffered from serious burnout because of the increasing veterinary shortage and more people wanting holistic veterinary care for their pets. Because holistic vets can't meet the demand, I decided to step out of the problem and find a way to make holistic veterinary care more accessible to everyone. Out of my burnout, my **Holistic Pet Health & Longevity Method program** was "born" to support pet parents worldwide.

With this holistic program **I help empower pet parents such as yourself go from feeling overwhelmed, frustrated and heartbroken because you don't know how to stop your animals' suffering and don't have the support and knowledge you need to help them heal, to knowing what is needed to restore their health with a step-by-step plan and support system so that you and your beloved animal companion can experience a vibrantly healthy, long and joyful life together.**

So, can you maybe feel a bit of that joy of possibilities? Do you dare dreaming about your animals exuberantly running through the fields with a huge grin on their faces? A smile so infectious that you can't stop smiling yourself and feel like a kid again who discovered a magnificent butterfly?





## The Short Cut

My long journey has led me to discover answers to “why?” as well as taught me that answers are everywhere if we dare to pause and listen. They’re in how your animal moves or responds to its environment or food for example. You’ll come across a word in an article that resonates and gets you thinking, or you’ll make the acquaintance of a squirrel who talks to you in its own words. It may also come from your own heart or your “gut feeling” pulling you towards something.

There is a lot of magic in this world if we open our eyes and hearts and ask “why”?

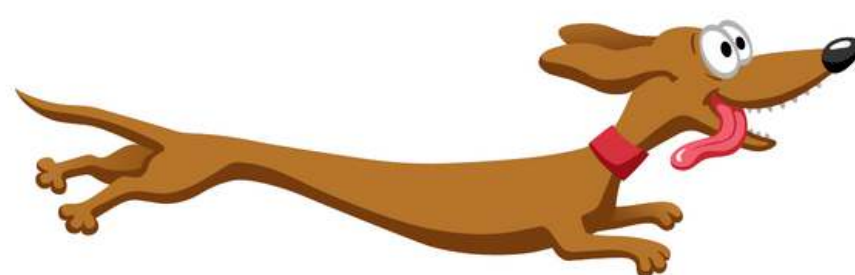
My personal very favorite response to anything in life that’s challenging me is “show me what I can learn from this”, “help me understand and grow” and “help me find a wiser and more empowering interpretation”. I may not get the answer right away, but eventually things make sense and I can find peace.

Little by little I discovered many healing modalities and then after quite a while longer it became clear that all aspects of my body needed attention in order to piece that puzzle together.

**This is where we get to the juicy part** and that’s what I want to share with you. I don’t want you to spend a decade trying to figure things out. I want you to be able to move forward right now because I want to see smiles. Your animals also don’t have any time to waste. So, allow me to share the “shortcut” with you.

Just in case you were wondering, this method of approaching healing is very special, but it’s in no way unique to me. There are many practitioners out there, for animals and humans alike, who practice in the way I’ll be sharing.

**So, let’s dive in!**





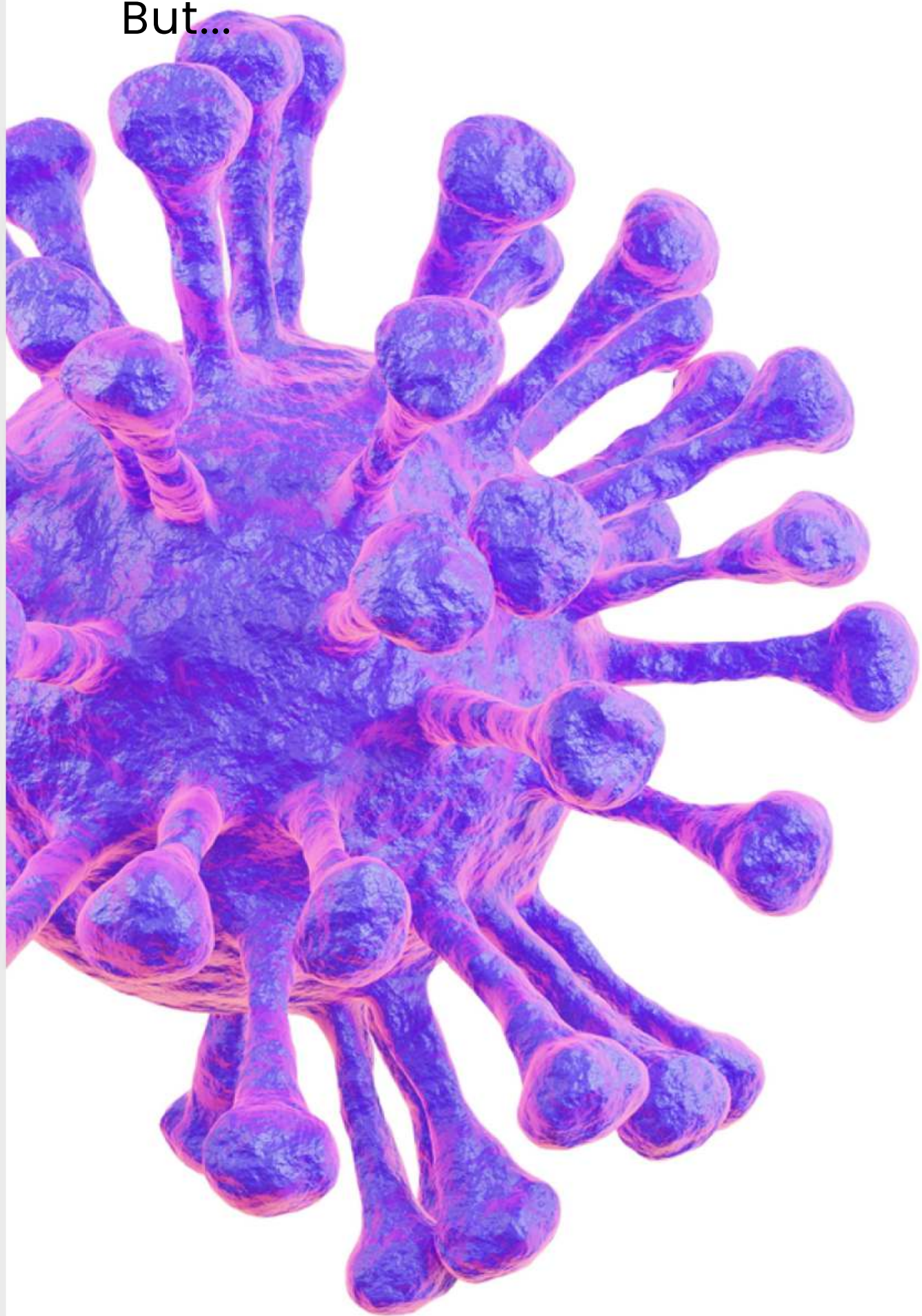
# FUNDAMENTALS

## What Is Disease Really?

When I was in veterinary school, the definition of disease was never really discussed. We learned about different diseases, but nobody ever really defined disease. I think it's important to look at what disease means and establish some good definitions. Developing this clarity will help pave the way to knowing what you need to do.

In our society, we're very quick to see symptoms, and we want to label these symptoms right away, because uncertainty is difficult to deal with. It's much harder to take a step back for a broader view of what is really going on than it is to slap a band aid on something. If you are like most of the population, you want a quick fix because nobody likes suffering. Therefore, you want to know what the disease is, and then you want to have the solution right away to end your animal's suffering.

But...



## There Is Only One Disease

Based on current beliefs, there is a seemingly infinite number of diseases, and it's very possible for your animal to have multiple diseases at the same time. While this is one way of looking at health issues, it is also possible to view all disease through a much simpler lens.

A broader definition of disease is a malfunctioning of cells.



A broader definition of disease is a malfunctioning of cells.

Our bodies and our animals' bodies are made up of specialized cells that have different functions:

- Pancreatic cells help regulate blood sugar levels.
- Cells in the gut govern how much nutrition is gained from food and liquid (among many other functions).
- Thyroid cells produce hormones that control all metabolic functions and the speed at which all biochemical reactions in the body occur.

If your animal has diabetes, for instance, you know that the cells of the pancreas are malfunctioning. If your animal has hypothyroidism, you know thyroid cells are having trouble. Understanding which cells are challenged gives you a lot of information about how to proceed.

However, no matter what kind of cell type you're working with, the underlying principle of how to address the malfunction is the same.

With this understanding, the next question to ask then makes total sense: "Why are these cells malfunctioning?"

Take some time to engage in the process of asking these fundamental questions:

- Why do the cells malfunction?
- Why is disease present?
- Why do your animals appear to not feel well?
- What are their symptoms showing you?





These are the questions you need to ask, not, “What shampoo should I use for my dog’s allergies?”

In this instance, the better questions to ask would be about the origin of allergy symptoms: “Why is my dog having an allergic reaction?”

The answer to the question of why cells malfunction is very simple.

## The Two Causes of Disease

There are two main causes: deficiency and toxicity.

- Deficiency: the body is not getting the nutrients it needs in order to be functioning properly.
- Toxicity: something is interfering with the cells’ ability to do their job.

For example, if you look at a wilted plant, what is your first thought?

It is missing something. It needs some water, right?  
Then, it might also need sunshine and nutrients.

What could be interfering with a plant’s health to make it wilt?

Maybe it has a bug infestation, or somebody poured gasoline on it—something toxic—and so it gets sick from that.

This is really logical thinking, isn’t it?

But somehow, we lost it in the midst of everything. So, take a step back, take a minute to see what might be driving your animal’s cells to malfunction.





The “why” is always going to be most important, because without it you’re just tapping in the dark.

That said, I will also contradict myself a bit, because the exact root cause is not always detectable. Despite that, we can still help the body out because we have basic knowledge of what it needs and we also know what interferes with its function.

## And This Where the Pillars of Health Come In

But before we dive in, allow me to talk to you a little bit about holistic medicine. People often tell me that they went to a “holistic” vet who ended up not being very holistic at all.

The word holistic comes from holism. A Wikipedia definition I like describes holism as “the idea that various systems (e.g. physical, biological, social) should be viewed as wholes, not merely as a collection of parts”.

In other words, everything is connected. Thus, a truly holistic vet will try to look at all parts of an animal including its living and social environment.

None of us live in a vacuum. The same is true for the body parts. None of them function on their own without considering everything else they’re connected to.

Thus, restoring an animal’s health has to take into consideration its entire life. All the trillions of cells and all the microbes that support the body’s function have to work in synchrony and harmony.





This means that in order to restore the body, we need to support all aspects of life and not use “holistic” medicine with the same mindset as allopathic medicine.

We don't want to use herbs and natural treatments to chase after and treat isolated symptoms. Used this way, it is just as ineffectual as allopathic medicine, because it's not addressing the cause of the issue; it's just treating symptoms.



Quality of life is of course most important, which means that we will sometimes need to use a symptomatic approach to prevent suffering while working on optimizing the body's function.

But we need to recognize that doing a little bit here and a little bit there won't get us the results that we're looking for. If a dog is aggressive, for example, relying on training alone to get the aggression under control may only work to a certain extent. It will not work to the degree that you would hope, because there's potentially another issue underneath—such as hypothyroidism—that needs to be addressed.

Health concerns are typically much more complex than we think. Diseases typically are not just back pain, a little bit of limping somewhere, or an ear infection.

Usually there are more factors involved. Thus, we need to look at the whole animal, not its symptoms alone.

The importance of looking at the whole and treating it as such, was the biggest revelation I had from my own health journey and it very much translates into healing our animals as well. They are not that different from us.



They also don't heal as well as they could if we – their person and family – don't also heal at the same time. That's why very often they will mimic our symptoms.

Since you're here and reading this, I'm not going to bore you with a monolog on why it's time to take action now. I think that's pretty clear by now.

These days "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" applies even more.

Enter the...

## THE 7 PILLARS OF HEALTH

"The part can never be well unless the whole is well." – Plato  
Have you ever tried to improve your animal's health through diet or exercise?

Have you gotten some positive results, only to see your results stall, or maybe even turn in the wrong direction?

Did you ever wonder why, in spite of your best efforts, you didn't achieve your goals and your animal is still suffering?

Simply put, if you do not address the seven components of health together, your efforts will most likely fail and you'll be wasting precious time that your animals don't have.





I learned the hard and long way that if you only address a portion of the seven pillars of health, you will only get a portion of the results you are expecting to accomplish or no result at all, because all seven pillars depend on and enhance one another.

A lot of people try one thing here and one thing there; for example, a little bit of acupuncture, a little bit of chiropractic, a little bit of herbs, a “yeast cleanse”, a little bit of this, and a little bit of that, without addressing the whole body.

Maybe the animal improves a little bit, but most of the time, the problem remains.

A perfect example is doing chiropractic care on a horse who has gut issues. I can do chiropractic work on it until I’m blue in the face. Unless the gut issues have been addressed, the body will not be able to maintain the adjustments.

Collectively the seven pillars are a methodical way of addressing health concerns. Just as systems are a necessity for any business to be successful, the body needs the same to achieve greater health and well-being.





# PILLAR #1

## NUTRITION



**Let food be thy medicine and medicine will be thy food.**

*~ Hippocrates, 400 BC*

Most veterinarians only had 2-3 hours of nutrition education in vet school and this education is sponsored by the big companies that make animal food. These big companies have the loudest voices and the biggest marketing budgets. Therefore, I recommend taking any kind of diet recommendation given by conventional vets with a grain of salt.

When dealing with food, conflicts of interest and money are very powerful. Little regard is given to our animals' true need.

## Nutrition Means Life

The MacMillan dictionary states that the definition of food is, "That which is eaten to sustain life, provide energy, promote growth, and repair tissues."

The average diet of dry food, canned food, and of course our very own donuts, burgers, fries, and soft drinks do not in any way meet these criteria. Dry and highly processed pet food may provide energy, but it inevitably leads to problems such as:

- Skin issues
- Digestive problems
- Blood sugar imbalance
- Hormone imbalance
- Autoimmune diseases
- Weight gain
- Metabolic diseases
- Cancer







Optimal health cannot exist without proper nutrition. Proper diet and clean water are a must.

Diet is what sustains our pets' life. It's what provides the cells with the nutrients they need to function properly. Without the nutrients, the cells can't do their job, and will end up malfunctioning, which —as mentioned earlier— is disease.

### **Quality Versus Quantity**

The quality of food has declined significantly in the last hundred or so years. Food sources have become deficient. Soils are exhausted by abusive monoculture and minerals are bound to the soil when doused with glyphosate (Roundup), making them unavailable to the growing plants.

The quality of food is also largely affected by what ingredients are used and how they're processed.

Unfortunately for animal feeds, all the leftovers from the human food and agricultural industry are repurposed into pet food. For example, in the dog and cat food industry, manufacturers are allowed to include:

- Meat that's no longer fit for human consumption
- Meat from diseased animals that have been laying around dead for days
- Old meat
- Roadkill
- And so many more nasty things that would make your stomach turn

The manufacturers can put any number of really disgusting things into dog and cat food that they would otherwise have to pay to discard of. It's easier and more profitable to make money from garbage. In other words, they're treating your animals like living landfills.





Food either heals or harms, and most commercially available foods harm. Just check out the Pottenger Cat study to see what happens. It's a fascinating observation on generational "transmission" of disease caused by poor diet.

There is no question that animals will be much healthier when they eat a species-appropriate diet. That's what their body is made to process and dry kibble ain't it!

## **The Price We Pay for Poor Nutrition**

I know that buying good nutrition for your animal can be costly, but if you don't give them good nutrition, they can end up with toxicities and deficiencies, which then cause the cells to malfunction.

Feeding cheap feed with low-quality ingredients that are harmful to the body will result in high vet bills, pain, and emotional distress among other discomforts. The price that you pay for poor nutrition is really high, not just financially, but obviously your animal will not be feeling as well and enjoy its life as much as it could. Plus, any time your animals are sick, you also feel sick.





# PILLAR #2

## GASTROINTESTINAL RESTORATION



“No Guts – No Glory” certainly applies when it comes to health. Even Hippocrates back in 400 BC knew that “all disease begins in the gut”. He was such a smartie!

Side bar: I’ve always been intrigued by the question of which famous person to invite to one’s dinner party and never really had an answer, but I think I just found it. I would invite Hippocrates if I could.

Back to the digestive tract... Studies are now revealing the mechanisms behind Hippocrates’ statement through the investigation into the microbiome. The microbiome is the sum total of all the microbes inhabiting the gastrointestinal tract.

The far-reaching effect of GI health on the entire body is staggering. Brain, cardiovascular system, immunity, joint health, pain modulation just to name a few, are all affected by what’s going on in the gut. Autoimmunity, allergies, cancer and all sorts of other afflictions require fixing the intestinal lining and microbiome in order for the body to even stand a chance to repair itself.

### Bugs – Our Best Friends

The microbial community within our gut determines whether we are likely to have ...

- GI conditions like colitis or irritable bowel disease
- Psychological issues like depression or anxiety
- Skin disorders such as allergies
- Neurodegenerative disorders like multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s or Alzheimer’s Disease and dementia
- Inflammatory conditions like rheumatoid arthritis







Even susceptibility to being overweight can be mediated by the microbiome's impact on thyroid autoimmunity and insulin resistance. To turn the conventional paradigm on its head, the digestive system is not merely a conduit for feces, but rather a carefully engineered housing for the microbiome, which in itself may well deserve the status of an organ, with its multiple functions.

Just a few staggering numbers (likely similar for animals):

- Healthy adult harbors ~100 trillion bacteria in gut alone
- This is 10X the number of human cells
- Humans possess 23,000 genes
- Microbiome contributes ~3,300,000 genes
- Communal gut microbial genome (microbiome) is ~150 times larger than human genome

So, who is running the show?

Microbes are what make the body work properly. To quote Raphael Kellman, MD, "we're a heap of microbes dressed up in a suit".

This of course brings much of our "war on microbes" into question and illuminates human short-sightedness and lack of understanding of the whole! In other words, we really have no clue.

And that leads us to the importance of the next pillar of health.





## **PILLAR #3**

### DETOXIFICATION



We're now exposed to tens of thousands of toxins on a daily basis through the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we ingest and the chemicals we put on our skin.

All cells of the body are poisoned in the process. This is compounded by the fact that the now equally poisoned detox organs can't properly perform their duty. Thus, we are not just poisoned, we've also become unable to rid ourselves of toxins. That's not good at all!

The liver is our main detoxification organ but the body also detoxifies through the kidneys, bowels, sweat glands and respiratory system.

Body clean-up also involves the immune system who recognizes and eliminates everything that's not healthy, including viruses and bacteria. But the immune system also recognizes and tries to eliminate malfunctioning cells that are damaged by toxins. When the immune system attacks our own cells in this fashion, we call that auto-immunity.

Of course, it's wonderful when the immune system successfully fights a virus and eliminates it, but when constant toxic exposure is present and the immune system has to remain engaged at all times, the results is chronic inflammation.

### **Oh No! Not Inflammation!**

As part of inflammation, the immune system produces inflammatory chemicals. Those are really helpful for acute issues, but if they're present in the body all the time, they can be viewed as toxins, because they end up destroying vital organs.

Once the immune system is overwhelmed it may start to malfunction or become unable to clean up cancerous cells for example.





## Doing It the Right Way

When detoxifying a body, we must support all detoxification organs and pathways and we must address the process in proper order to ensure success and not make the animal feel worse. Detox done at the wrong time and the wrong way may cause more harm than good.

This is why I always start out with Pillars #1 & 2. I want to create some degree of stability so that the body is capable of eliminating toxins. Simply implementing these two pillars already gets detox going.

Because of the unprecedented toxic exposure, the body's detox system must be maintained and nurtured at all times to support healthy bodily processes.

In other words, detoxification is not a one-time deal, though there are times during the year where cleansing is aided naturally. Spring and fall are perfect opportunities to enhance waste removal. Using seasonally present foods are perfect ways to support the body and so are different herbs.

Fasting or intermittent fasting also allows the body to focus on clean-up rather than to use all of its energy to digest food. Care must be taken because not all animals are candidates for this. It goes without saying that we MUST eliminate all sources of damaging chemicals we have control over and vote with our money.

## Toxins That Lurk

Most of us are aware of the most commonly present toxins, but I want to draw just a little bit of attention to an unseen contributor to cellular malfunction.

Much of a body's disease and malfunction is caused by communication breakdown between cells as well as with the microbiome. A powerful source contributing hugely to that is human-made electromagnetic radiation such as WiFi, cell phones, dirty electricity and artificial light.

The impact of such EMFs on the body is so damaging, that some human doctors won't even work with patients who are unwilling to remove EMF sources, because they simply won't be able to heal.



# PILLAR #4

## THE NERVOUS SYSTEM



**Anything's possible if you've got enough nerve.**

*~ J. K. Rowling*

This pillar is all about communication, although in vet school, my brain totally glazed over during lectures on that subject. I just couldn't wrap my brain around it (pun intended...LOL).

But since then, I have gained a tremendous appreciation for it. I've become quite the neuro nerd in fact.

Assessing the nervous system has become my #1 go-to, because so many issues can easily be resolved or at least helped by tweaking it just a little bit. When an animal is presented to me with mobility issues, digestive troubles or my favorite – “my dog is getting old”, I will always start with optimizing the nervous system.

Very commonly, issues resolve with simple manual intervention, eliminating the need for countless joint and other supplements. Optimizing the nervous system in this fashion has diagnostic value as well. If my patient didn't improve with a treatment, I know that I need to dig deeper as there must be more going on.

### Stepping On Nerves

The nervous system, consists of the brain, spinal cord and peripheral nerves and controls the overall function of the body.

The brain is to the body as the CPU (central processing unit) is to a computer. When the CPU is functioning at top speed, the computer works great. If the CPU has issues such as viruses or junk files slowing it down, the computer – in my case – is at high risk of being thrown out the window! In case you're wondering, I'm only slightly impatient.

Assuring that the neurotransmitters (NTs) of the brain are balanced is essential. Some of you may have already heard about – serotonin, dopamine, GABA, acetylcholine, etc. NTs are the chemicals that allow the brain to run efficiently and transmit information from one nerve to another.



# THE NERVOUS SYSTEM



By providing a healthy diet, you can help balance the brain and prevent cognitive decline into your pet's senior years.

The spinal cord carries information from the brain to the target organ, gland or tissue by way of the peripheral nerves. If that information is at all impeded or slowed on the way, optimal function cannot be executed. Over time, this leads to decreased function and eventually disease.

One of the best ways to affect and maintain the nervous system is with regular body work throughout your animals' life.

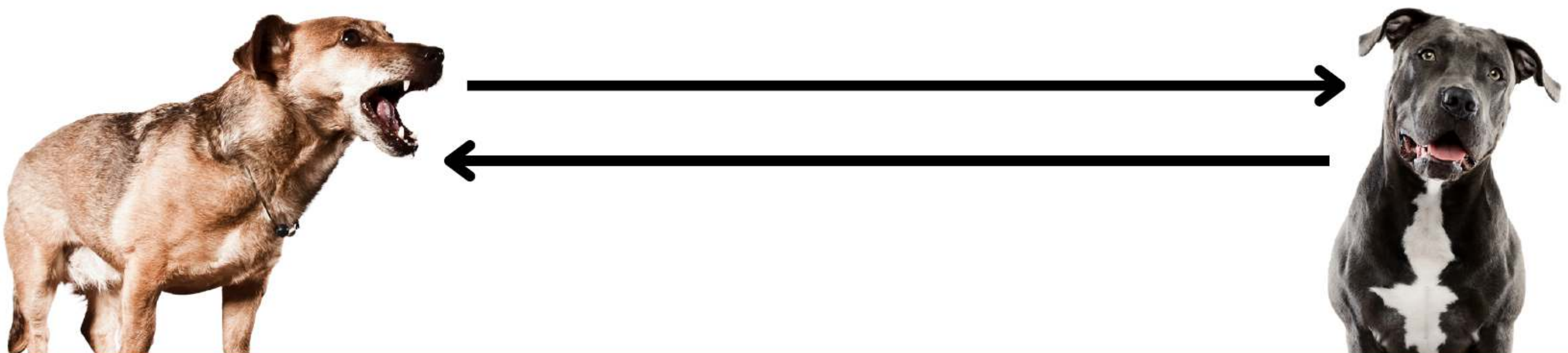
Structural care is a largely underappreciated aspect of health and people generally wait until something goes wrong. Poor nerve communication not only results in diminished organ function. Over time muscle weaknesses, postural imbalances, injuries and inactivity set in, leading to alterations in function and degenerative changes.

## **It's a Two-Way Street**

Communication isn't only going from the brain to the end organ. Muscles, organs, skin, etc. send information back to the brain. The stimulation of the brain in this way is crucial for maintaining brain mass and preventing neurodegeneration. That's why animals who get plenty of exercise tend to live longer and healthier lives.

Lack of proper nerve input and movement cause wasting of muscle mass that then creates joint instability, arthritis and pain. It's quite the vicious cycle that needs to be avoided at all cost if you want your animal to remain mobile into old age.

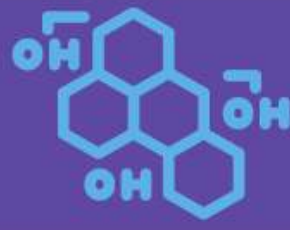
I will leave you with this statement: If you see arthritis in your pet, you're late to the game, because arthritis starts early in life. Arthritis is an archeologic finding.





# PILLAR #5

## HORMONES



While nerves convey information via electrical impulses, hormone glands send out chemical messages.

Sadly, hormone glands are mostly not receiving the attention they deserve in veterinary medicine. In fact, we just chop off what we don't like – ovaries and testicles – without considering the ramifications. These glands are essential for maintenance of health such as a healthy weight and body structure for example. Yet they are removed for convenience in many cases and the patient is then left with the consequences and effects for the rest of its life.

Only in recent years have we learned that it's not the smartest idea if we want to keep our animals healthy. Who knew that nature is perfect the way it is? (I'm being sarcastic of course.)

### The Roller Coaster

Hormone glands communicate with each other all the time in order to maintain homeostasis in the body. If one of the hormone glands isn't producing enough hormones, everything gets out of balance. If you're a guy, just ask a woman and she'll tell you all about it!

All hormone glands serve very important purposes within the overall function of the body. There are hundreds of different hormones at work to make our body a well-oiled machine. Hormones regulate everything in our body, from energy production to metabolism, lean muscle mass, mood, digestion, immune function, behavior, weight, and so much more.

Causes of hormonal imbalances can come from:

- Poor diet
- Sedentary lifestyle and stress
- Pain
- Body composition and structural issues
- Toxicity (internal and external)

Small abnormalities or imbalances will throw off the regulatory equilibrium and cause poor communication. This leads to poor health with gradual or rapid decline depending on the severity of the malfunction.



## PILLAR #6

### FITNESS AND EXERCISE

**Fit is not a destination, it's a way of life.**

*~ Author unknown*

All of our bodies are meant to move – animal and human alike. They are meant to be in motion. That's why they are constructed the way they are. When we neglect the body and don't exercise it, it begins to break down, lose muscle tone, become weak and flaccid and we suffer.

We know from animals that have far surpassed average life span – such as the 30-year-old Australian Kelpie “Maggie” – that daily exercise is essential to achieving longevity.

Animals are not made to be couch potatoes. Animals are made to move and most of them actually live for the time they get to spend outside. My own childhood dog would show up with her leash in her mouth when it was time for our daily outing. Mind you, I lived in Switzerland at the time. Therefore, “daily” meant rain, snow or shine – 365 days a year without fail. So, forgive me when I don't have much understanding for excuses 😊.

In order to get the best health possible for your animal, you need to imitate what nature demands for movement would be. For dogs and cats, exercise is mostly from walking around to see if they can find some prey somewhere, and if they do see prey somewhere, then they pick up speed and have to really exert themselves to hunt. It's important that we work with their physiology.







## The Benefits of Movement

The benefits are infinite. For one, it keeps blood circulation going. Good blood flow is important for all cells to get their nutrients and oxygen, and to be able to get rid of waste.

It helps with balancing hormones, because if your animal exercises, it will feel better afterward. Exercise is a good way to relieve stress. It balances out brain chemistry, so your animal can let go of anxiety it might have.

## Feed Me!

Movement is also crucial because parts of the musculoskeletal system don't have a direct blood supply:

- Ligaments
- Tendons
- Cartilage

They get their nutrition through diffusion. That happens through compression and decompression as they move, like in the case of cartilage. The action of movement is like a pump or like a sponge. You squeeze the sponge, then you release it. It fills back up with fluid, you squeeze it again, and it squishes the fluid out.

That's how these connective tissues get their nutrition. If they don't move, they don't get adequate nourishment and are at high risk of degeneration.







## Pain Modulation Through Movement

Movement also stimulates neuronal pathways. Any time an animal moves, their brain is integrating a lot of information. That's important, not only for maintaining brain mass and counteracting neurodegeneration, but it also helps to modulate pain.

Obviously, if there's a broken leg, it's not a good idea to move. So, you have to be smart about it. But when it comes to arthritis, you have to keep the body moving a bit just so that it will inhibit some of the pain sensation.

You don't want to overdo it if an animal is really uncomfortable, but the less they move, the more pain they will end up with due to loss of muscle mass and resulting decrease in joint stability.

If your animal's joints are already inflamed, the degeneration and pain will only get worse the more their muscles atrophy.

Anytime I have some pain somewhere, such as not being able to turn my head, I use dance as a therapy and always feel better after.

Movement also circulates lymphatic fluid. It helps with detoxification because it brings more blood flow to the liver and the kidneys. It helps with absorption of food because it stimulates appetite and better digestion, and it burns fat.





## Here's How

When you exercise your friend, it's important that you do so safely. A dog who is chasing after a ball will make quick turns and abrupt sort of stop-and-go motions while attempting to catch the ball. Those movements can make them more prone to expensive injuries. If this is the way you exercise your animal, I recommend aiming the ball at a bush or anything that forces them to slow down before they reach the ball.

A good exercise and fitness program also looks at which muscle groups an animal is engaging, and which muscle groups might be underutilized. If your animal does a lot of exercise or sports, it's important to make sure that you balance demand on different muscle groups appropriately. For example, big dogs tend to use more of their leg muscles to move themselves. They don't engage the core musculature so much. Doing some training and balancing exercises will help to strengthen and activate some of the core muscles they're not using very much.

Core muscle exercises help them develop:

- Stability
- Balance
- Performance

These exercises also reduce the risk for injury.

If your animal has arthritis, you may consider giving them the opportunity to swim. While swimming, the animal is moving but doesn't have to carry its whole bodyweight.

Giving an animal a chance to fully and gradually develop their physical body is crucial. Just like with us humans, it's a matter of training for what we need. Any dancer, for example, learns to use the body appropriately and correctly to be able to perform the movements. So do our animals. They have the innate ability to move properly.



## PILLAR #7

### EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH



Never underestimate the power of emotional and mental wellbeing! Animals are just like us. They thrive on happiness and mental stimulation. It keeps them sharp and engaged in life.

From a physiologic perspective, a happy pet implies a relatively good balance of the autonomic nervous system. Let me explain...

That's the part of the nervous system that functions on autopilot. Heart rate, blood pressure and digestion are just a few of the bodily parameters that are regulated by it.

You may know it a bit better as the sympathetic/parasympathetic nervous system – fight-or-flight versus rest-digest-heal.

Nowadays, we're all much more sympathetically – aka. stress – driven as can be seen by the tremendous uptick of behavior issues in our animals. Be it anxiety, aggression, recurrent urinary tract issues (cats), diarrhea or other expressions of stress – our animals feel it!!

### **“You Reek!”**

They know the instant we step through the door after a long day of work how the day went. They smell the cloud of stress hormones surrounding us. It would be foolish to believe that they won't notice or that we can hide anything from them. If you've ever noticed your pet mirroring your own stress, you certainly know what I'm talking about.

Stress is the buzz word today. Most everyone feels that there is a tiger lurking in the dark, ready to eat us alive at any moment. According to studies, this chronic stress is more damaging than being a chain-smoker!

So, whatever you need to do to get a bit of relief and drop into a more parasympathetic rest-digest-and-heal mode will help out your furry friends.







You may be on to me by now that this pillar is a bit more about you than your pets. Our mental and emotional state has a huge impact on our animals and the only way to diminish its negative effect on our animals is to manage our own life style better.

Our animals can only be as healthy as we are. If we don't take care of ourselves, they will keep holding up the mirror.

Fortunately, because they love us unconditionally and without judgment, they mostly don't mind serving us in this way.

Aren't we lucky?





# PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER



**"The whole is greater than the sum of its parts."**

*– Aristotle*

By focusing on all seven pillars, you not only allow your animal companion's body to maximize its healing potential and its growth, but you'll also make a big difference for yourself and the people around you.

Never underestimate the power of every little change you make. It has global effects just like the ripples created by a pebble hitting the smooth water surface.

Also be patient and forgiving with yourself, because we're all on a journey of learning and growing. There is no real destination, just the experience of the "here and now", which is where our animals reside and would love for us to join them.

Implementing the seven pillars of health is also an ongoing lifestyle choice and not a temporary side path. You must work on all of them, and not just the ones you like or those that seem easy.

I know that your commitment and love for your furry friend will give you both the life you were meant to live and enjoy together.

Maybe you'll even chose to join your animal and adapt these lifestyle changes for yourself and your family. What a wonderful adventure that would be!



Implementing the seven pillars of health is an ongoing lifestyle choice and not a temporary side path. You must work on all of them, and not just the ones you like or those that seem easy.

I also urge you to find a guide or mentor on this journey, because your pets don't have a decade for you to figure it out. They need a fast track to help you wade through all the information available so that you can narrow down on what will make the biggest impact on their health and longevity.

**If my Holistic Pet Health & Longevity Method speaks to you, click the button below to schedule an interview with me to find out if my program is a good fit for you.**

**SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW**

Thanks for coming on this journey of learning with me! I know it will benefit your animals greatly when you apply the 7 pillars to their lives.

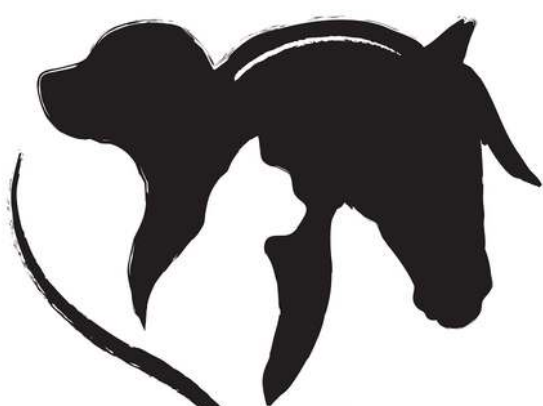
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