

Is Cancer an Emotional Response?

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There are people who lead a healthy lifestyle – exercising regularly, eating fresh food, and getting consistent check-ups with their doctor. They have no history of cancers in their family, no exposure to environmental toxins. They even think positively and have a good outlook on life. Yet, they still get cancer.

This is often the case, for example, with people diagnosed with multiple myeloma, the cause of which is unknown. Multiple myeloma can be treated, with 75% seeing improvement; however, it can come back. Like most diseases, when we treat only the symptoms, we leave the door open for a reoccurrence. The results could be dramatically better, if only we knew the root cause(s).

There is a seemingly endless list of cancer-causing agents in our environment. Anyone who has seen the movie Erin Brockovich knows that toxic chemicals are a culprit. For those who haven't seen it, Brockovich is the real-life activist who, during the course of an investigation into the disproportionately high number of cancer cases in a California community, discovered Chromium 6 in the water supply. Chromium 6 was later proved to be the cause of many cancers. We also know asbestos can cause mesothelioma, which is why it is no longer used in construction. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. HPV can cause oral or anal cancer; h. pylori can cause stomach cancer, and EBV can cause several types of cancer. Overexposure to the sun can cause skin cancer, and smoking causes 90% of lung cancer cases. Yet not everyone who smokes gets lung cancer, while some people who never picked up a cigarette and live very healthy lives - do get it. This begs the question, could the underlying cause of cancer be childhood traumas or an abusive relationship in early life?

As children, we learn how to manage negative situations by mirroring the adults in our lives. For most of us, articulating these emotions is not realistic, either because we don't know how or are discouraged from doing so. Acting out may be the

release of bottled or unresolved emotions, but it's impossible to release a hundred percent of them.

If this theory sounds unlikely, consider the fact that we do not have a way to measure emotions, or how the invisible negative energy from them accumulates in our bodies over time. For example, in Chinese acupuncture the lungs are related to grief. Could the unresolved trauma of a parent dying be the root cause of cancer in the lung? Could hopelessness and frustration centered in the pancreas be the source of pancreatic cancer, a terminal diagnosis with no known cause?

As a doctor, I've learned that anything is possible. I also know that emotional stress, that invisible enemy that causes so many illnesses, is often not figured into the equation when treating them. I've also read about high incidents of disease in certain populations that could be tied to collective trauma. For example, the Irish potato famine caused near starvation for one generation, yet a high rate of obesity was found in their children. Now scientists are connecting this phenomenon to epigenetics, or the study of how our environment and behavior (including our thoughts) affect our gene expression. This expression may also be passed down through generations, which would explain the cause of disease, including cancer, in children of Holocaust survivors.

There are a thousand different types of cancers, most with unknown causes. If it's not a genetic mutation, not an infection, not a chemical toxicity, not obesity, not radiation, or bad luck, is it possibly a response to emotional turmoil, or the result of it having been passed down from our parents?

Traditional medicine focuses solely on the body, meaning that two-thirds of the human is not included in any pathology or other testing. Wouldn't it be interesting to do a CT scan of the mind or an MRI of the soul? We might find cancer becoming a thing of the past.