

## July 2006 Newsletter

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Welcome to the July 2006 Newsletter. This month's newsletter features research on chronic neck pain and herbs for diabetes. Articles this month include topics on Professional Practice Building and Herbal Medicine. Enjoy!

### Research: Fruit extract in Chinese medicine found effective in combating diabetes. [30 June 06]



A Gardenia fruit extract traditionally used in Chinese Medicine to treat the symptoms of type 2 diabetes does indeed contain a chemical that reverses some of the pancreatic dysfunctions that underlie the disease, researchers report in the June 7, 2006, Cell Metabolism.

The chemical therefore represents a useful starting point for new diabetes therapies, they said.

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### Q&A — Acupuncture for fertility.

Q. My husband and I have been trying to have a baby for the last 18 months. We have had fertility tests done which have shown everything to be normal. We are not using IVF. Is it true that Acupuncture can help with fertility?

This month's Q&A focuses on the role of Acupuncture in fertility and is available exclusively online at [www.Acupuncture.com.au](http://www.Acupuncture.com.au)



### Research: Acupuncture for chronic neck pain. [27 June 06]



A new report suggests that a combination of Acupuncture and medical care.

eResearchers from Charite University Medical Center in Germany have found that treatment with Acupuncture added to routine care in patients with chronic neck pain is associated with improvements in neck pain and disability compared to treatment with routine care alone.

Acupuncture is commonly used for clients experiencing problems arising from the neck region including neck pain and neck stiffness. There is a lack of evidence about the effectiveness of Acu-

puncture treatment used in routine medical care.

The researchers in this study used 14,161 patients with chronic neck pain experienced for more than 6 months in a randomized controlled multicentre trial plus a non-randomized cohort.

Patients were divided randomly and of the 14,161 patients, 1880 were randomized to Acupuncture, 1886 to the control group, and 10,395 included into the non-randomized Acupuncture group.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Research: Acupuncture for chronic neck pain. [27 June 06]***(Continued from page 1)*

The Acupuncture group received up to 15 treatments over a three month period. Patients who did not consent to randomisation received Acupuncture and all subjects were allowed to receive usual medical care in addition to study treatment.

After three months the neck pain and disability patients experienced

was graded using the neck pain and disability scale by Wheeler. Neck pain and disability improved by 16.2 to 38.3 and by 3.9 to 50.5 in the Acupuncture and control group respectively.

Treatment success was essentially maintained through six months. Non-randomized patients had more severe symptoms at baseline and showed higher neck pain and

disability improvement compared to randomized patients.

**References:**

Acupuncture for patients with chronic neck pain. Witt CM, Jena S, Brinkhaus B, Liecker B, Wegscheider K, Willich SN. Institute of Social Medicine, Epidemiology, and Health Economics, Charite University Medical Center, Berlin, Germany.

**Acupuncture & TCM Events Calendar for July 2006****08**

**Melbourne - Sun Ten Chinese Medicine Pearls Seminar 2006** (Clinical application of Li Dong Yuan's theory in the treatment of Gastro-Intestinal disorders, Clinical application of Zhu Dan Xi's theory in the treatment of phlegm disorders; Clinical application of Ye Tian Shi's theory in the treatment of deficient detriment disorders such as chronic fatigue syndrome). When: Saturday 8th July (1-5pm) + Sunday 9th July (10-5pm) Where: : Casey Plaza Hall, Building 10, RMIT 124 La Trobe Street, Melbourne. Contact: Greta Young on (03) 9842 0253

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**Brisbane - Traditional Cupping Workshop - Eastern Tradition. Presented by Bruce Bentley.** When: 8th + 9th July. 9.00am - 5.00am Where: Australian School of Meditation - 23 Kurilpa St, West End, Brisbane. Contact: Bruce Bentley on (03) 9576 1787 or [www.healthtraditions.com.au](http://www.healthtraditions.com.au)

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**Sydney - Chinese Dietary Therapy. Presented by Rod Sanchez.** (3 AACMA CPE Points) When: 11th July. 7.30pm - 9.30pm Where: SITCM. 92-94 Norton Street, Leichhardt, NSW 2040 Contact: Igor Bilek on (02) 9550 9906 or [igor@sitcm.edu.au](mailto:igor@sitcm.edu.au)

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**Sydney - Sun Ten Chinese Medicine Pearls Seminar 2006** (Clinical application of Li Dong Yuan's theory in the treatment of Gastro-Intestinal disorders, Clinical application of Zhu Dan Xi's theory in the treatment of phlegm disorders; Clinical application of Ye Tian Shi's theory in the treatment of deficient detriment disorders such as chronic fatigue syndrome). When: Saturday 15th July (1-5pm) + Sunday 16th July (10-5pm) Where: : UTS Building two, Broadway, Sydney. Contact: Greta Young on (03) 9842 0253

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**Sydney - Chinese Dietary Therapy. Presented by Rod Sanchez.** (3 AACMA CPE Points) When: 18th July. 7.30pm - 9.30pm Where: SITCM. 92-94 Norton Street, Leichhardt, NSW 2040 Contact: Igor Bilek on (02) 9550 9906 or [igor@sitcm.edu.au](mailto:igor@sitcm.edu.au)

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**Brisbane - Sun Ten Chinese Medicine Pearls Seminar 2006** (Clinical application of Li Dong Yuan's theory in the treatment of Gastro-Intestinal disorders, Clinical application of Zhu Dan Xi's theory in the treatment of phlegm disorders; Clinical application of Ye Tian Shi's theory in the treatment of deficient detriment disorders such as chronic fatigue syndrome). When: Saturday 22nd July (1-5pm) + Sunday 23rd July (10-5pm) Where: : Carlton Crest Hotel, Brisbane. Contact: Greta Young on (03) 9842 0253

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**Brisbane - External Injury Workshop. Presented by Bruce Bentley.** When: 22nd + 23rd July. 9.00am - 5.00am Where: Australian School of Meditation - 23 Kurilpa St, West End, Brisbane. Contact: Bruce Bentley on (03) 9576 1787 or [www.healthtraditions.com.au](http://www.healthtraditions.com.au)

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**Sydney - Chinese Dietary Therapy. Presented by Rod Sanchez.** (3 AACMA CPE Points) When: 25th July. 6.30pm - 9.30pm Where: SITCM. 92-94 Norton Street, Leichhardt, NSW 2040 Contact: Igor Bilek on (02) 9550 9906 or [igor@sitcm.edu.au](mailto:igor@sitcm.edu.au)



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## The Acupuncture Business (Part two)

By Robert Kendall

I have been thinking long and hard about what to write for this month's newsletter. There are so many things to discuss and so many places to begin. This highlights an important point about Professional Practice Building. It never is just one thing to do, it is hundreds of little things added together that make the big success stories. These successes belong to the people who are willing to spend many hours perfecting their skills. The first step towards success is your **willingness to change**. Change is one of the keys to practice growth. I guarantee that if you are struggling in clinic it is mainly because you are not willing to make changes, but I bet you expect your clients to.

The second master key is **communication** - Verbal and non verbal. Are you a good communicator? When you explain things, do clients understand or do you get that 'rabbit in the headlights' stare back at you? In other words are you being heard, do you get through? Please remember that there are many ways to communicate or dare I say fail to communicate. When we communicate only about 10 to 20% is done by words and the voice inflection. The rest is made up of body language and intuition.

So what are you telling people by your appearance, your gestures and mannerisms, your office environment, in your correspondence and the types of services you offer? An easy example of how having the right service can increase business, is how chiropractors use x-rays to convince a client that they need anything from 1 year to, well the rest of their lives, just by showing a picture. "A picture tells 1000 stories". That is why I use an Iridology photo or energy read out chart to show clients. If you can 'show' that they have low energy in the liver you will often have a better response than reading the pulse and 'saying' their liver energy is low.

One of the easiest places to change is the clinic environment and as a visual demonstration of who you are it, carries powerful messages to the client on



the type of person who is about to treat them.

### The Clinic Environment.

I am always amazed how so many practitioners forget how important first impressions are.

I am taken back at how bad some clinics are. I have seen some bad ones over the years. Curtain doors into cubicles, half walls where you can hear about Mrs. Jones haemorrhoids, dirty couch sheets, cheap towels, dusty waiting rooms and ceiling fans that have never been cleaned, old magazines, sick plants, plastic chairs, etc etc.

It is a simple thing to correct but you must first become aware of what is needed. So the first thing to do is go outside and have a look at your clinic as a client would see it. Is the street clean; are the windows and door clean, what do your street signs look like? Go inside and sit down in your waiting room chairs, what do they feel like, what does the reception area look like, is it clean?

Now go and lay on your treatment couches, even take your cloths off, lay there. What would a client feel like, what can you hear and what would they look at? How clean is your ceiling? Simple things yes, but you would be surprised at how simple small

things can stop a client from returning and more importantly referring other people to your clinic.

True you might be a great healer and you don't have to care about anything, people will just turn up because you have the magic touch.

Wonderful, I envy you. But I have a practice in the most over serviced area in Australia. There are more health practitioners per capitor that anywhere else in Australia. So I need to have something that will draw people to my Practice. When I built my clinic I spared no expense. I decided that I would make the best clinic I could. We have clients who come in and comment on how peaceful it feels just to be in the clinic. In fact I have had people ask if they could just come and sit in the clinic when they feel stressed. By doing my best to create the best environment, I realised that I have also created a Sacred Healing Environment, which means that the healing has already commenced as soon as they have entered.

### Building a practice is really all about educating the client.

The good old Chiropractors did a huge amount of research on the type of people who came for treatment. They found that all of their cliental where well educated, most

(Continued from page 3)

with college degrees. They discovered that 10% of their clients where totally open to what ever the practitioner recommended, 10% where closed to what ever the practitioner said, they just want to be fixed and get out and that 80% of their clients didn't know much about what the practitioner did but they where *willing to be educated about the services and methods of treatment*. This 80% is where the Chiro have been trained to build their business on. Does your clinic have a notice board? Do you have information sheets and handouts? Do you run educational evening talks? How do you educate your clients on all the things you can do for them. Remember it is about what you can do for them not about how great you are.

I don't know about you but I get pretty tired saying the same thing over and over to every client. I have found it invaluable to say, "if you would like to learn about that, why don't you come to one of our educational evenings" or "let me get an information sheet for you".

### ***Quality of service versus Quantity of Treatments***

How do you manage your time, how do you treat enough people per day to pay the bills and how do you keep a high level of service while treating all the people you need to treat to make a healthy income?

When running a clinic there is always a trade off between how many clients you treat and how long you spend with them.

The problem begins when you first start treating you have plenty of time because you don't have many clients so you give them as much time as you can.

I fell into this trap when I first started. I would often spend 1.5 hrs treating one person. Now I will only spend 15 min with a regular client, but let me say here the client still feels they are get-

ting the full service of an hour treatment, it all boils down to time management.

Over time you learn that more time doesn't always mean a better treatment. Also some clients don't want to be in the clinic for that long and they will tell you by not coming back. If you have to spend a lot of time with your client then you will either have to work long hours or charge more for your time.

A kinesiologist friend of mine charges \$120 an hour but he only can see 7 people a day. I charge \$45 for an hour and see 20 a day, but I can see 4 people an hour. The only difference is, and this is what I love about Acupuncture, is that I don't have to spend all the time with the client. While the needles are in, I am out into another room treating someone else. So the first things to look at are, how do you wish to treat? What style of acupuncture do you use? How long do you need to treat a client? And the big question how much money do you need to make to a) break even, b) be able to save and c) live a good life? You then look at how many rooms you have to treat in and how many hours and days you are willing to work.

Once you have all that worked out we can begin to see what you will need to do to make the money to live well.

OK here is an example.

You practice Acupuncture, Let us say that you need 50 mins to treat (10 mins to welcome the client into the room get them down on the couch, read the pulses, look at the tongue ask the relevant questions, 20/30 mins for the needles to stay in, 10 mins for cupping, massage and getting them out). So 50 mins a room X by the number of rooms, say 3 rooms, means you should be able to do at least 3 people an hour maybe 4. If you charge \$45 a treatment that is \$135 an hour X 7 hours a day = \$945 a day. How many days you work is up to you.

When I first started I was lucky enough to have a chiropractic friend who took me along to all the chiropractic seminars on practice build-

ing. Boy do those guys know how to set up a practice and make it work.

Now if you want to get into the ethics of how many clients to treat let me say that the chiros believe the more people you treat the bigger effect you have on the larger community. The Chiropractors believe that each client will have an effect on 10 other people. So if you treat 50 you will influence 500 people. If you treat 500 people in a week then you will influence 5000 people. I have seen chiropractic clinics that easily treat 100 to, dare I say, 300 people in one day. There are chiropractic systems that successful practices are built on 2min treatments with clients coming in 3 to 5 times a week.

I must say at this time, this is not how I would practice and I have chiro friends who hate this type of Chiropractic. I only tell you all this to break any closed mind attitudes that treating many people a day can't be done. It is probably being done in a chiropractic clinic near you.

So what is their secret? Well if I tell you I will probably have to kill you, nahh only joking, it is common knowledge.

It all boils down to **time management**.

First thing that you need to do is divide up you appointment book into New patients time (1hr) and regular client time (15min). In other words you have, go fast times and go slow times.

Keep your clients together do not space them out because you might only have 4 for the day. Bring them one after the other. One, it makes them think you are really busy and two, you have the rest of the day to do all the million other things that have to be done in a clinic. In fact you will feel less tired after a busy morning than a stretched out full day. It might seem stressful at first but with time, it takes about 3 months, you will see where you waste time and you will begin to speed up.

Now when you start you have an hour for new clients. In this hour you spend all the time you need to help the client feel comfortable and very clear about what you can do for them. It is at this time You outline the next 9 appointments. The client now knows what to expect and you know what you have to do. Now they are set up to have you spend only 15/20 minutes with them in a regular appointment. What you have to watch is that you don't keep rediagnosing what to do with each treatment. This

will waste huge amounts of time with little change in results.

Now if the client needs to talk to you, ask them to come back in one of your extended times to chat. At the end of a course of treatments you then book them in for an extended appointment again, where you do a full reassessment and if need be, set up the next round of appointments.

Having fast and slow times makes the day more interesting, it can be fun and very satisfying. The day goes quickly and you feel that you have had a good day. You have helped as many people as you can and you have been well paid for all your work.

I love working in a busy clinic it is exciting and invigorating.

To summarise what you can do to build a better practice.

1. Be willing to change
2. Look at how you communicate, verbal and non-verbal
3. Check out your clinic environment, what are you saying about yourself?
4. Find ways to educate your clients on what you have to offer.
5. Explore ways to manage your treatment times

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## Research: Fruit extract in Chinese medicine found effective in combating diabetes. [30 June 06]

*(Continued from page 1)*

Such a drug could offer a big advance, the group added, as no currently available therapy for diabetes actually targets the underlying causes of disease in insulin-producing pancreatic beta cells. Insulin controls blood levels of glucose, the body's main energy source. In those with diabetes, insulin deficiency or insulin resistance causes blood sugar concentrations to rise.

The team discovered that Gardenia extract contains the chemical "genipin." Previously known for its ability to cross-link proteins, they now find that the chemical also blocks the function of the enzyme called uncoupling protein 2 (UCP2) through another mechanism.

"We think the increase in UCP2 activity is an important component of the pathogenesis of diabetes," said Bradford Lowell of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School. "Our goal therefore was to discover a UCP2 inhibitor capable of working in intact cells, as such an inhibitor could theoretically represent a lead compound for agents aimed at improving beta cell function in type 2 diabetes."

Study coauthor Chen-Yu Zhang's familiarity with traditional Chinese medicine led the team to consider the extract of Gardenia jasminoides Ellis fruits. Pancreas cells taken from normal mice secreted insulin when treated with the extract, they found, whereas the cells of mice lacking UCP2 did not. The results suggested that

the extract worked through its effects on the UCP2 enzyme.

"When I first saw the results, I was in disbelief," Lowell said. "I didn't think we could ever be that lucky." However, blinded repetition of the initial experiments confirmed the results every time, he said.

Through a series of chemical analyses, the researchers then zeroed in on genipin as the active compound. Genipin, like the extract, stimulated insulin secretion in control but not UCP2-deficient pancreas cells. They further found that acute addition of genipin to isolated pancreatic tissue reversed high glucose- and obesity-induced dysfunction of insulin-producing beta cells. A derivative of genipin that lacked the chemical's cross-linking activity continued to inhibit UCP2, they reported.

That's a good sign for the therapeutic potential of genipin-related compounds, according to Lowell, as such indiscriminate cross-linking would likely have adverse effects. However, further work will need to examine whether inhibition of UCP2 itself might also have some negative consequences.

### References:

Cell Press (2006) Cell Metabolism Volume 3, Issue 6: June 6, 2006

## Your contributions welcome!

This newsletter has been created for the public, the students and practitioners of Acupuncture & Traditional Chinese Medicine. It relies much on information contributed from the community. We welcome any contributions including news articles, research papers or anything you feel would be suitable for publication on our website and in this newsletter. To contribute visit [www.Acupuncture.com.au](http://www.Acupuncture.com.au) and choose "Contribute" from the menu system.



# The Dumbing Down of American Education: Implications for Herbal Medicine

**Author: Roger W. Wicke, Ph.D.**

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## A personal perspective

Bemoaning the decline in U.S. educational standards has become a popular public sport. American students' embarrassing ignorance of world geography, basic science and math, and declining literacy is the profitable subject of government committees, philanthropic foundations, corporate think tanks, armies of consultants, and educational bureaucracies, who all continually demand more resources and money even as the problem worsens. Conversely, it seems that the severity of the problem has become proportional to the amounts of money and effort devoted to studying and "fixing" it.

Until very recently, I believed that the quality of herbal education, as well as of general and university education, was merely a function of determining the right curriculum and teaching methods and then convincing the proper authorities to adopt them. Only in the last few years have I gradually come to the conclusion that the system of American public education itself is so deeply and irreversibly flawed that it cannot be

fixed. I first began to suspect this after observing that, in many cases, the clinical abilities of graduates of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) programs declined after schools achieved accredited status; the accreditation process typically requires documentation of financial resources, review of administrative protocols, and many other issues having little direct relation to educational substance and philosophy, and more to do with money and political power. (Such a result is consistent with the well-documented conclusions of Stephen Buhner [1] that professional licensing and regulation seldom result in improved health care delivery, but are almost always guaranteed to increase costs, to minimize competition, to reduce the public's freedom of choice, and in some cases, to actually decrease quality of care.) A number of factors may be involved, the most common of which are:

Excessive focus on rote memorization rather than on developing problem-solving abilities;

A shift toward mimicking the western biomedical model with its reductionistic and often simplistic ways of defining problems;

A corresponding shift away from empirically effective traditional methods that may be perceived as having a lower scientific and social status;

A channeling of institutional resources into promoting professional economic power and status, even at the expense of the core clinical curriculum.

According to conventional wisdom, accrediting organizations are supposed to help a school improve its educational programs - that is, unless they are driven by a hidden agenda, as John Taylor Gatto thoroughly documents in his book *The Underground History of American Education*.

To become a clinically effective TCM herbalist, the following skills are necessary:

Reason and logic;

Ability to observe carefully and to per-

form complex pattern recognition tasks;

Ability to re-evaluate a problem when the textbook solution does not seem to work.

Most colleges of TCM fail to enhance these skills and, instead, actually suppress them by forcing students in lock-step formation through a series of boring and rigid rote-memorization tasks followed by multiple-choice testing. Students are generally not exposed to clinical cases, either as paper exercises or in clinic, until after several years of this type of indoctrination. Graduates of such programs suffer from the same problems as victims of fundamentalist religious cults - they cannot see how the dogma applies to the real world, instead attempting to force fit it to reality in often rigid and inappropriate ways.

The assembly-line method of education is a relatively new innovation in education world-wide. Many TCM herbalists in Asia were formerly trained in apprenticeships, where they learned the subject naturally by observing and participating in the treatment of thousands of real people. One of my most capable herbal teachers was a Chinese man who had learned TCM herbalism by apprenticing with a master herbalist - he was a teenager at the time. His clinical results were quite good, and often far superior to those of colleagues who had graduated with college degrees, though he never had any formal academic training.

Over the 15 years that I've taught TCM herbology, the types of students who seem to have remained unaffected by the general decline in academic skills are

Students who have learned primarily by homeschooling or who are very independent-minded;

Older students who were fortunate to have had a liberal education that forced them to think, argue, and debate possibilities;

Certain professionals, including alter-

native-minded medical doctors, who seem to be endowed with a natural immunity toward indoctrination that left their native intelligence intact;

Foreign students from countries that have not yet suffered under a dysfunctional American-type educational model.

Over the past decade I had written a series of articles addressing the quality of TCM herbal education. These earlier articles [2, 3] focused primarily on improved curriculum and more enlightened regulatory philosophies - for I then still believed that the situation could be remedied, if only a few enlightened officials could be reached. However, I now believe that my former articles touched only the most superficial issues while the deeper ones remained unseen - sharks lurking in dark waters.

In response to an invitation to speak at a UC Berkeley conference ("Plants, Medicine, and Power") whose stated goal was to study the effects of corporate and cultural influences on indigenous herbal practices worldwide, I documented 15 distinct tactics [4] available to large pharmaceutical and health-product corporations for maximizing profits, all of which are diametrically opposed to the way that traditional herbalism is practiced by local peoples, and all of which act to disenfranchise these local populations. These 15 tactics describe how large corporations manipulate educational, media, and regulatory bureaucracies.

On returning from the conference, colleagues informed me of two books that, they assured me, I would be eager to read and that would validate many of my former conclusions and suspicions:

Gatto, John T.; *The Underground History of American Education*; Oxford Village Press, New York, c2001.

Hartmann, Thom; *Unequal Protection: The Rise of Corporate Personhood and the Theft of Human Rights*; Rodale Press, c2002.

John Taylor Gatto is a former public school teacher of more than 30 years who was awarded "Teacher of the Year" by both the State of New York and New York City - in spite of his long-term personal war with petty and dysfunctional school bureaucracies. Gatto's book is potentially one of the most important and influential books of the past decade. *Underground History* is a detailed account of the introduction of 19th-century Prussian-style educational reform in

America, designed with the primary goal of creating de-humanized robotic workers to man the assembly lines of the industrial age. Gatto explains why dysfunctional and addictive behaviors, low literacy rates, and inability for self-reflection and critical thinking are intentional results of the public school system. Modern corporate-centered life depends upon a public that can be predictably manipulated by mass media and advertising to become loyal consumers, loyal and unquestioning employees, and to become helpless dependents upon corporate largesse for survival - destroying the integrity of family and community life in its drive for world dominance.

Thom Hartmann's book, *Unequal Protection*, explains how corporations achieved the legal status that allowed them to manipulate educational, media, and regulatory bureaucracies, overwhelming and destroying individual rights in the process.

The remainder of this article explores Gatto's and Hartmann's observations with the goal of understanding how to create a model for TCM herbal education that circumvents the self-destructive processes afflicting American education. It is my hope that even if it is too late to reverse the tide of destruction in my own country, that this article serve as a warning to other nations to avoid copying the American educational model. The alternative is a world of destroyed families and communities supplanted by legions of mindless slaves toiling for global corporations.

### **A summary of John Gatto's findings on compulsory American public education**

Many people are under the illusion that public education has been with us forever. It has not. It is an innovation of the late 19th century whose introduction was frequently resisted with violence by parents and communities throughout America. Gatto extensively describes what early American life was like, and formal schooling was distinctly absent from most people's lives, yet literacy rates before the era of compulsory public schooling are estimated to be about 97%. Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln were all self-educated and taught themselves to read without help of formal instruction, as did most Americans during the first 100 years of the nation's existence. (In Switzerland today, only 23% of the population attends high school, similar to rates in America in the early 20th century - yet Switzerland has the highest per capita income in the world and one of the most highly skilled work forces. One of its secrets to success is the common availability of apprenticeships during adolescent

years as an option instead of academic preparation for university study.)

By the early 1900's, American industrialists recognized that compulsory public education was the most useful means to socially engineer the American population to suit the purposes of industrial capitalism. Andrew Carnegie, J.P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Ford were key architects of the system of modern forced schooling that we have today. Gatto writes, "Forced schooling arose from the logic that fossil fuel in conjunction with high-speed machinery imposed upon flesh and blood." Railroad development, availability of coal and oil, telegraph communication, and machinery for mass-production threatened to make the dreams and aspirations of individuals and small communities irrelevant. Forced schooling was seen as necessary to indoctrinate future corporate workers in conforming to industrialists' visions of a scientifically controlled and optimized society.

Prior to World War I, President Woodrow Wilson, in a speech to businessmen, stated that henceforth public policy would be geared to providing a public education tailored to producing industrial workers who did not question orders and were skilled in only basic manual labors, and that a liberal education would be reserved for only a small elite. Public education was designed specifically to diminish students' capacity for critical thinking, to diminish literacy, and to stamp out any dangerous signs of independence and creativity, which might otherwise contribute unpredictable and burdensome aspects to the task of corporate management and planning.

During the 20th century, a network of corporate foundations, university education and psychology departments, educational accrediting boards, and government agencies arose to oversee implementation of the blueprint for this ambitious social engineering project. These entities include such organizations as:

Rockefeller Foundation

Carnegie Foundation

Columbia Teachers College

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University of Chicago

U.S. Office of Education (later the Department of Education)

National Educational Association

National Training Labs

The achievements of these educational bureaucracies in destroying literacy is impressive:

Literacy rates during the first 100 years of America's history, during which compulsory public schooling was almost non-existent, are estimated to be about 98%, not including the slave population of the South at that time. Popular books of the time contain a complexity of thought and sentence structure that would today exceed the ability of even many college graduates.

During the early 1930's, literacy rates among voluntary U.S. military applicants was 98%.

Ten years later, literacy rates among all military conscripts was 96%.

During the 1940's public education was expanded greatly, and Korean military conscripts demonstrated the dramatic results - a drop in literacy rates to 80%. These men had had the "benefits" of more years under the tutelage of professionally trained teachers and "scientifically" selected textbooks than any previous American generation.

By the Vietnam War, literacy rates had dropped further to 73%, and of this 73%, many of these individuals could not read and understand newspaper articles or read for pleasure, and could not write coherent thoughts without assistance, in spite of a dramatic increase in educational spending per capita.

In 1993, the National Adult Literacy Survey determined that only 3.5% of the American adult population were capable of literary skills adequate to traditional college study, compared to 30% in 1940, representing a greater than 8-fold decrease over a 53-year period.

This last statistic should be especially alarming, as the literary skills neces-

sary for college-level study are the engine that drives social and economic progress and that provides the basis for cultural enrichment. Such a severe drop will ultimately result in an impoverishment of culture that, according to many historians (Toynbee [5], Spengler [6], Quigley [7]), will inevitably lead to our social and political disintegration as a nation.

According to statistics from the U.S. Justice Department, 80% of all violent felons are illiterate or nearly so. Gatto states his belief that much of this violence might be traced back to the humiliation public schools dish out to students who are labeled illiterate. Yet the statistics strongly implicate the public schools as being responsible for such illiteracy, since most children will learn to read on their own if left completely to their own motivations and to help from their families and peers, as the early history of America reveals. Gatto documents that reading is inherently so easy to learn that many children teach each other to read with little adult intervention, suggesting that in many cases, illiteracy is a learned behavior. Lest the reader still think this is preposterous, Anthony Oettinger, a former member of the Council on Foreign Relations, once asked an audience of communication executives, "Do we really have to have everybody literate - writing and reading in the traditional sense - when we have means through our technology to achieve a new flowering of oral communication [television]?"

The primary instrument of inducing illiteracy in the American population has the method of teaching reading by whole-word recognition, which has been proven repeatedly to be a failure, yet it remains the established method in many public schools. Learning sight-sound correspondences naturally occurs first in children learning any language with a phonetic alphabet. Once children learn to decode the letters on a page into their phonetic equivalents, they can easily teach themselves to read increasingly complex texts.

Following is a summary of additional techniques used by public schools to teach learned helplessness and incompetence:

Emphasize rote memorization and getting the "right" answer over ability to use knowledge to solve problems and to gain a greater understanding of how the world works.

Present each course as a subject disconnected from other courses and with little relevance for daily life. This principle is a key ingredient in the Prussian formula for creating a society stratified by caste - compartmentalize knowledge and expertise so that only broadly educated administrators at the top of the pyramid (less than 1% of the population) understand the big picture. The Prussian model was consciously modeled after that of ancient Sparta; the Hindu system of caste segregation has been maintained by a similar compartmentalization of mass education for the lower castes.

Present subjects in short 50-minute segments with bell-ringing to signify time to stop, instilling in students the ability to drop their interest at a moment's notice. (Much as television has led to a 30-minute attention span - if a problem can't be solved in 30 minutes, it is "impossible".)

Fill the school day with long stretches of tedious drill, standing in lines, and dealing with boring administrative procedure - with the purpose of teaching students to tolerate mindless bureaucracy. (Several students and parents at my local public school system have estimated that the actual substance of what is taught each day could be accomplished in less than 30 minutes.)

Teach students that their place in life is determined by numbers - test scores and rankings - not by the unique qualities of their individual accomplishments.

Force students to read books and to pass multiple choice questions about these books, transforming what would normally be pleasurable and self-motivated activity into drudgery. (A former librarian at my local high school observed that most of the faculty did not even read one book per year, even though she pleaded with them to read specific books she thought would be relevant to their classes. Once, her book acquisitions for the library were found hidden inside the principal's closet - his excuse was he thought the books were too controversial and would require the students to think too much.)

And, most importantly, fill up the students' schedules with so much meaningless drill and activity that any time for family life, personal privacy, or independent experience is squeezed into oblivion, leaving the public school as students' primary "nanny" by default - along with the ubiquitous television and its varied forms of mind control.

The last item is perhaps the most insidious, for when it is combined with the phenomena of the two working-parent household, the

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modern corporate social system has effectively reduced the family to a mere husk of its former vitality in the first 100 years of America, when the primary mode of educating young people was their participation in essential community activities. (Benjamin Franklin spent only two years in formal schooling, learning primarily by apprenticing as a printer; his later activities included scientific experimentation, politics, and international business.)

Finally, the most damning statistics of the destructive powers of public schooling become evident from comparisons of the performance of home-schooled children with those from private and public schools [8]: homeschooled children as a group show significantly higher performance on reading and math scores when compared with both public and private school students nationwide. (Many of the homeschooled children I've met are gregarious, intellectually curious, and self-motivated.)

Gatto concludes that the American educational experiment has been a calculated success in creating numerous "dependent children who grow up to be whining, treacherous, terrified, dependent adults, passive and timid in the face of new challenges." This debilitating condition "is often hidden under a patina of bravado, anger, [and] aggressiveness." Why any nation would wish to inflict this on its own youth cannot be explained other than that its people and its business leaders have succumbed to a pathology so great that cultural suicide has become the accepted price of doing business.

### **A summary of Thom Hartmann's findings on corporate abuse of power**

While John Gatto makes clear how corporate powers imposed forced schooling on American children, one might logically ask how corporations became so powerful that they were able to achieve this goal. After all, the Founding Fathers of America had supposedly established a system of government that protected individual rights - abusive corporate monopolies (British crown-chartered corporations) were one of the key issues in the Revolutionary War, and the writings of Thomas Jefferson and others make this clear. Jefferson considered freedom against monopolies a basic

right and insisted on a "no monopolies in commerce" clause to the Bill of Rights; however, this stipulation was not included after much contentious debate, presaging future battles between the capitalist-oligarchical classes and the anti-Federalist anti-monopolist factions. Thomas Hobbes (a philosopher popular among many of America's Founding Fathers) stated that corporations had the potential to be "worms on the body politic". In 1817, James Madison wrote:

Incorporated Companies, with proper limitations and guards, may in particular cases, be useful, but they are at best a necessary evil only. Monopolies and perpetuities are objects of just abhorrence. The former are unjust to the existing, the latter usurpations on the rights of future generations. Is it not strange that the Law which will not permit an individual to bequeath his property to the descendants of his own loins for more than a short and strictly defined term, should authorize an associated few, to entail perpetual and indefeasible appropriations...

According to Buckminster Fuller: "Corporations are neither physical nor metaphysical phenomena. They are socioeconomic ploys - legally enacted game-playing - agreed upon only between overwhelmingly powerful socioeconomic individuals and by them imposed upon human society and all its unwitting members."

The close relationship between corporate monopolies and fascism is embodied in the definition of fascism appearing in the 1963 edition of the American Collegiate Dictionary:

Fascism: a governmental system with strong centralized power, permitting no opposition or criticism, controlling all affairs of the nation (industrial, commercial, etc.) emphasizing an aggressive nationalism, and (often) anticommunist.

(Recent editions of many American dictionaries define fascism merely as a form of tyranny - could this be merely one more indicator of the general trend toward enforced illiteracy and intentional "dumbing down" of the American public? Similarly, legal commentators have observed that, whereas the 6th edition of Black's Law Dictionary is generally clear and concise, many definitions of the 7th edition have been reworded to be more obscure, circular, ambiguous, or confusing to the lay reader.)

The following table summarizes the changed status of corporations over two centuries of American history, as documented in Thom Hartmann's book, *Unequal Protection*:

#### Corporate constraints and privileges

Early 19th century

Late 20th century

Revocability of corporate charters, duration

Revocable if fails to fulfill chartered purpose.

Not generally revocable.

Revocable in cases of misbehavior, damage to the public.

Not revocable without overcoming current statutory and case law, and granting due process to the corporation as person under the 14th Amendment.

Granted for a limited time, i.e., 20 or 30 years.

Granted in perpetuity.

Liability

Incorporation did not relieve management or shareholders of responsibility or liability for corporate acts.

Limited liability extends to all matters.

Corporate officers were held criminally liable for actions in violation of the law - "just doing my job" no excuse.

"Just following orders" a common defense against personal or criminal liability.

Jurisdiction of corporate law

State, not federal, courts heard cases involving alleged corporate legal disputes and violations of law.

Most cases of corporate law are now heard in federal court due to 14th Amendment requiring due process and equal protection to all "persons".

Corporate governance

Directors required to be stockholders.

Directors not required to be stockholders.

Corporate meetings required to be in the state of principal place of business.

Corporate meetings may be anywhere.

Limitations on corporate assets

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Prohibited from owning stock in other corporations.

May hold controlling interests in other corporations, allowing for complex and interlocking chains of control.

Real estate holdings limited to that necessary to carry out their chartered purposes.

Real estate holdings not limited by law.

Limitations on corporate activities vs. corporate "rights" under the modern personhood doctrine

Prohibited from making any political contributions, either directly or indirectly.

Corporations lobby politicians heavily, to the point that many politicians are known to be virtually "owned" by certain corporate interests. (1st Amendment "rights")

Prohibited from making charitable or civic donations outside chartered purposes.

May establish charitable foundations, which are now used widely to shield income from taxation and to influence public policy through foundation grants.

State legislatures could set the rates that monopoly corporations could charge.

Anti-trust laws have largely been ignored or made ineffective.

All records and documents open to inspection by the legislature or attorney general at any time.

Privacy rights under the 4th Amendment and corporate personhood now require court orders and search warrants.

Could be prosecuted multiple times for criminal violations.

Under the 5th Amendment, retrial for the same corporate crime is barred.

Most of these acquired corporate privileges arise from the doctrine of corporate "personhood", originating from a deceptive and erroneous head-notes summary of a U.S. Supreme Court case, Santa Clara

County v. Southern Pacific Railroad, which was later quoted as the basis for this flawed and destructive doctrine.

Thom Hartmann ends his book with a simple legislative strategy for revoking excessive corporate power: municipalities, counties, and state governments should pass ordinances, statutes, and, ideally, constitutional amendments explicitly revoking the doctrine of corporate personhood. Local governments around America are beginning to do exactly that. (The book includes sample legislation to propose, with explanations of the variations in legal wording depending on context.) Such actions may help to rein in unfair corporate influence over many areas of American life, including its system of public education.

Foreign countries should refuse to repeat America's mistakes and should hold corporations, especially international corporations, under tight control, lest they lose their national sovereignty and their citizens become financially and mentally enslaved, "dumbed-down" creatures as many Americans now are.

## Recommendations

John Gatto concludes in *Underground History* that the public education system in America is so broken that it can no longer be salvaged. I've had many conversations with public school teachers who have privately (and confidentially) informed me that they have come to the same conclusion. Gatto, however, does propose a list of specific ideas for creating educational situations that work, independent of the public school system, and I've adapted some of these suggestions to the problems of TCM herbal education. (See "A Thomsonian Manifesto", below.)

It is important to distinguish the contemporary American educational system from public school systems in other nations that educate productive citizens who contribute to their nation's strength and well-being. Public education does not need to be self-destructive. However, John Gatto and others have concluded that the vast problems in America's system have become so ingrained and institutionalized that a valid option is to simply walk away from the system, denying it substance - money and students, and to create separate and distinct alternatives. Homeschooling, for the vast

majority of children whose parents cannot afford expensive private schools, is the most viable option for young children of primary school age. Apprenticeships are a valid option to many current forms of professional education. Physicians and lawyers often learned in this manner during the first 100 years of America's history and throughout much of European history until recently.

Herbalists are in an advantageous position to chart the course of their profession, as currently herbalists, as such, are not a licensed profession in the U.S. I've written numerous articles documenting how licensing may be used as a tool for corporate control of the health professions, yet some herbalists continue to think that accreditation, licensing, and regulation will become their meal-ticket to financial security and status. (See Stephen Buhner's article [1] documenting how most professional licensing and regulation is initiated at the request of professions who desire economic protection and status and seldom at the request of consumer activists groups. Instead, consumer activist groups have strongly supported the recent trend toward Health Care Freedom acts [12], which provide protection of unlicensed and unregulated health care providers from malicious prosecution.) Others labor in secret to steer the course of professional organizations toward these goals, regardless of the damage it may do to freedom of choice in health care and naively unaware of political history. Yet others have crassly stated that they are in favor of licensing and protective regulation for their own professional cliques regardless of the harm it may cause to others. (Fortunately, a growing majority of American herbalists support a more libertarian perspective and recognize the dangers of licensing and regulation in a hostile, corporate-controlled economic environment.) Gatto's warnings of "whining, treacherous, terrified, dependent adults, passive and timid in the face of new challenges" remind us that our society is in imminent danger of degenerating into myriad factions grabbing at a shrinking base of power and economic control, shrinking because America has become more adept at producing chaos and discord than anything of positive economic value.

The historian Carroll Quigley [9], in his analysis of the evolutionary patterns of civilizations, concludes that one of the foremost factors in the decline of any civilization is the transformation of "instruments of expansion", which provide important advances in the health, education, and culture of the population, into "institutions", which become more interested in preserving their hegemony rather than fulfilling the functions for which they were founded. Because many of America's critical functions are now administered by institutional bureaucracies, this

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does not bode well for the republic. Quigley goes on to state that when such institutions become immune to efforts at reform, the only remaining hope is that the population develops ways of circumventing the power of the institutions. The alternative to this is that the civilization congeals into empire, a state of mass senility with fixed habits and ideas, incapable of adapting to new circumstances. All empires throughout history have been fated to eventually collapse from their own internal disintegration.

### **A Thomsonian Manifesto**

Samuel Thomson, a popular and influential herbalist of 19th century America, was instrumental both in improving and expanding on the simplistic folk herbalism of the time and in opposing the forces of medical monopolization. He adhered to the Hippocratic philosophy of paying close attention to empirical, clinical results and had a disdain for theoretical speculations with little connection to reality. However, his influence and efforts were only successful until the early 20th century, when the allopathic medical cartel obliterated herbal practice and placed synthetic chemical (petroleum-based) medicine at the forefront of health care. [10] Interest in herbal health care waned until the 1960's when the ecology, back-to-nature, and natural health movements revived interest in herbal medicine.

The following specific recommendations, which I've collectively labeled "A Thomsonian Manifesto" in honor of Samuel Thomson, are a distillation of ideas resulting from my own observations of what works and what doesn't in the realm of herbal practice together with crucial political insights from the two books by Gatto (*Underground History...*) and Hartmann (*Unequal Protection*).

### **Educational methods**

Promote apprenticeships as primary means for learning herbal skills, much as the Swiss currently train young people for many professions with great effectiveness. Apprenticeships are the nearest equivalent to homeschooling in the realm of professional education. This type of education is much less likely to produce academic know-it-all types whose grasp on reality is tenu-

ous due to lack of practical experience.

Promote voluntary, not mandatory, standards for herbal education; such standards should be created with primary input from experienced clinical herbalists in the case of clinical education, and from experienced herbal wildcrafters and product manufacturers in the case of herbal processing and manufacturing education. Academic theorists lacking significant experience in some type of health-care setting should not presume to lead groups for discussing and setting educational standards for clinical herbalists, as is currently the practice among a number of American herbal organizations. This is a bad habit borrowed from American higher education (and from a long European tradition of herbalism that has tolerated philosophical theorizing disconnected from physical evidence or clinical validation [11]), in which professors presume to teach academic subjects with inadequate personal life experience to rein in their fanciful speculations, leading to the laughable and pathetic phenomena of economists whose predictions are no better than random-number generators, computer science instructors who cannot program a computer, psychologists whose children are out-of-control monsters, and educational psychology instructors who train teachers in methods that produce illiterate and dysfunctional children.

Design a clinical herbal curriculum centered around case studies in which academic subjects are explored as useful tools to analyze and solve aspects of these clinical cases. Such a method will help to avoid the seeming disconnectedness of the academic subjects that are taught in many herbal and naturopathic schools (anatomy, physiology, pathology, biochemistry, etc.). This method should attempt to simulate the situation of the apprenticeship as closely as possible.

The Socratic method of inquiry and dialogue should be used to involve students and instructors in debating the merits of various approaches and should challenge them to evolve beyond mere cookbook methods. (This mirrors the way that young children best learn language: not by rote mimicry, as parrots are often taught, but by engaging in meaningful conversation with adults.) Such method re-

quires instructors who know their subject intimately rather than having learned only from books and multiple-choice exams administered by yet other book-learned instructors, themselves often freshly graduated with the ink barely dry on their diplomas.

### **Political strategy**

Eliminate corporate personhood by means of statutes and constitutional amendments, thus preparing the way for eliminating a whole nest of evils in one swoop, including unhealthy corporate control and influence on educational institutions, professional organizations, and accrediting bodies.

Avoid giving power or support to organizations with entrenched, hierarchical structures, due to the high risk that these hierarchies may be easily infiltrated and taken over by corporate influences. (Once firmly established, institutions have a tendency to promote their own survival over any obligations to fulfill officially stated purposes.)

Promote state Health Freedom Acts [12] - statutory acts to protect the status of non-licensed and non-regulated health care providers, including herbalists, and to prohibit malicious prosecution under medical practice laws. (Before supporting specific Health Freedom Acts, be sure to check that they do not include requirements for mandatory registration of non-licensed health providers, which are often a precursor to licensing, and that they do not contain any other concealed clauses that would undermine freedom of choice and freedom from unnecessary regulation. It is a common trick to promote tyrannical legislation with benign-sounding labels - the "Patriot Act" being a notorious recent example.)

Withdraw support from regulatory bodies, accreditation boards, and organizations that do not actively support, or that threaten, freedom of choice of health care options, including the rights of native and ethnic populations to patronize traditional health providers - Hispanic bone-setters and herbalists, native American medicine men, traditional Chinese herbalists, American Eclectic traditional herbalists, etc.

Be ever vigilant for organization spokespersons who speak with forked tongues - who claim support for freedom of choice in herbal health care, yet secretly support herbal licensing, regulation, and accreditation to promote the private economic agenda of a professional clique.

Insist upon decentralization of power among herbal professional groups and political lobbying organizations. A single organization that becomes too ambitious, attempting to

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serve multiple functions (professional certification, political lobbying, continuing education and conferences, etc.) risks violating the age-old caution against placing all one's eggs in a single basket; if the basket is stolen, much is lost. The lessons of warfare (Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* [13]) teach that lesser powers cannot hope to wage successful battle against imperial forces by attempting to match their bureaucracies - such bureaucracies only become ripe candidates for infiltration and take-over by the dominant power. Centralized bureaucracies only work to the advantage of the dominant imperial power (and even these are the source of its own eventual disintegration [14]); the lessons of guerrilla warfare reveal that decentralized, independent groups operating under common philosophical and political goals are the most effective time-tested means for surviving and countering this type of power.

## Conclusion

Educational quality, professional licensing and regulation, fair governance, fair trade, and restraint of corporate plunder are intertwined, international issues. To solve problems in education requires us to consider the broader contexts. What we as individuals decide to do, or not to do, will affect the course of the 21st century. Doris Haddock summarizes the dilemma succinctly: "It is not an honest difference of opinion; it is a global struggle of people versus a global crime syndicate that counts taken-over governments and multinational corporations among its members." [15] To this list should be added major professional, educational, trade, and philanthropic organizations. According to Arundhati Roy, in a commentary on the political perspectives of Noam Chomsky, "When ordinary people weigh costs and benefits, something like an uneasy conscience could easily tip the scales. For this reason, they must be guarded against reality, reared in a controlled

climate, in an altered reality, like broiler chickens or pigs in a pen." [16] Each of us must choose whether to respond like broiler chickens or pigs in a pen, or, as thinking, feeling human beings, to break through the media's deceptions and public schooling mind-control.

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