

LEISA MILLAR

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Foreword by The Gawler Foundation

THE WAY OF THE NATURAL THERAPIST

INSPIRATIONAL PERSONAL STORIES
TO GUIDE MODERN-DAY HEALERS



THE WAY OF
THE NATURAL THERAPIST

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*Inspirational personal stories
to guide modern-day healers*

LEISA MILLAR
JAMES KETUB GOLDING

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James Ketub Golding, 1978-
The Way of the Natural Therapist:
Inspirational personal stories to guide modern-day healers

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to health, healing and wellness.*

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FOREWORD

“Know thyself”—like many natural therapies, these words have withstood the test of time, across cultures and alongside the advances of modern man in a range of fields. For a therapist, the words “know thyself” are a mantra for authentic inner growth and effective therapeutic practice. Today, with the increasing demands of modern life, natural therapies are an important part of any individual’s health plan.

Leisa Millar and James Ketub Golding have assembled a range of therapists from different modalities to talk about their own practices. They provide the reader with insight into who the therapists are and why they work the way they do. But more than that, they have created an all important sense of community, inviting the reader into the personal stories of experienced practitioners thereby providing links between the similar yet different ways that people work.

What makes a “good” healer or therapist? This is a question worth considering and this book allows us to catch a glimpse of the “calling” experienced by some of the best. We witness how, beyond the calling, deep authentic growth is an essential part of continued “good” therapeutic practice. I see this in the people in our therapeutic team at The Gawler Foundation.

They renew themselves again and again in their work, they are the living embodiment of what they teach, and they take time to retreat regularly. They are therapists because their deepest instincts have called them to the work and there is a substance in them that stems from their life experience and the challenges they have risen to. In all of this, deep inner growth is the grist of a therapist's life.

The Gawler Foundation is also a living example of what it means to work with a sense of community. Natural therapies are a pillar of our work, taking an integrated approach to health, healing and wellbeing. Many of our therapists have several therapeutic specialties, crossing modalities and integrating them into unique offers that benefit clients in the everyday encounter. Our programs are fundamentally based on a carefully considered mix of natural and traditional therapies: meditation, nutrition and counselling are supported by massage, qi gong, yoga and other client specific modalities offered in response to individual healing needs.

Leisa and Ketub are generously donating proceeds from this book to The Gawler Foundation. They do this in recognition of the way therapists can work together to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to individual and collective wellbeing—this also is the way of The Gawler Foundation. By offering this support, they are acknowledging our credibility in integrated health care, the value of multimodal therapy and the very real need for funded research into natural health care—research that is independent and without the influence of pharmaceutical designs. We acknowledge *The Way of the Natural Therapist* as a book that is of its time and a special resource for therapists in their pursuit of excellence.

Uniquely placed, this book is one of the first to explore the value of deep authentic growth, positioning this growth alongside technical knowledge and experience as the key to

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therapeutic brilliance. This is as true for therapists as it is true for the individual. Knowing another's story is a wonderful way to "know thyself".

Karin Knoester
CEO, The Gawler Foundation
August 2010

THE WAY OF
THE NATURAL THERAPIST

A good traveller has no fixed plans,
and is not intent on arriving.

Lao Tzu

INTRODUCTION

LEAP OF FAITH

Leisa Millar and James Ketub Golding

Everyone is on a journey, making their way through life. For some, the way is vague and obscure. For others, the way is clearly paved in stone. Regardless of your outer journey, at certain times you may find yourself asking questions of deep enquiry into the nature of life. With this enquiry comes new understanding and inner transformation. Your external world becomes somewhat different and a little easier to traverse. But what do you do with this newfound wisdom and insight? One choice is to share it with others. This is often the path of the natural therapist—to seek understanding and insight, to grow as a human being and to be of service to others.

This book is about that quest, told through the personal stories of experienced natural therapists.

Personal stories can be powerful—they can inspire you, make you laugh, make you cry, give you hope, and help you learn many splendid things. They blend knowledge with emotion, connecting you and the storyteller through a similar human experience.

We first discovered the power of personal stories when we began sharing our personal experiences in our natural therapy work. People related to our respective stories of anxiety, stress, panic attacks, depression and shyness. They were curious to know what we did to help ourselves at the time and how we ended up being natural therapists helping others now. In our case, we fell onto the path of natural therapy through illness and synchronicity. However, it is not like this for everyone. Others may have purposely sought out the path to be a natural therapist with intent or inner guidance. Everyone's story is different.

We became curious about this diversity and why some natural therapists maintained longevity as practitioners. Given our own challenges as natural therapists, we wanted to know whether we were heading in the right direction. We began questioning the natural therapists we knew and sought guidance in their personal stories. The insight and wisdom we received in return was invaluable. We never expected it to become the inspiration for this book.

Having just started out as natural therapists, we needed to read a book like this one, not write it. Our exploration as natural therapists was youthful. We had been straddling two worlds for a few years, hanging on to professional careers whilst pursuing respective natural therapy practices. (Leisa worked as a social policy advisor in the government and facilitated reiki courses and private sessions on weekends and after work. Ketub completed mind-body medicine studies and launched himself as a holistic counsellor whilst working part-time as a computer programmer).

Six months before the conception of this book, we both took a major leap of faith and quit our full-time careers. These careers had provided us with significant financial security. However, we both knew within our hearts that we wanted to

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focus on being natural therapists. We also yearned for a simpler, less busy life.

The timing for us to be fully committed therapists seemed right. Our client base was growing and we had launched a new meditation and relaxation course with a large following. During the next few months we tried many external things to attract more clients to financially support ourselves. We desperately wanted the meditation course to expand; we ventured into sound healing meditations and new early-morning, outdoor meditation classes; we offered discounted sessions; made regular pamphlet deliveries to local areas; and revamped our websites. Nothing seemed to work. In hindsight, we had become scattered, impatient and tried too hard to control the growth of our practices. We naively thought our path would be easier because we had let go of having a secure job and were doing what we loved.

We began to feel immense insecurity and uncertainty, with fear being our uninvited companion. During a trip to Sydney, we sought guidance from our mentor, Christos Dorje Walker. Dorje advised us that to help others, we needed to find joy and peace from within rather than depending on external causes and conditions. He also asked us to sit with the question, “Is what I am offering working for me?” We began to determine how relevant our work was to what people in society were facing. From Dorje’s guidance, we realised there are many people out there struggling with their lives, and we needed to find our authentic way of serving them.

With this in mind we both began to shift our internal perspective. Some questions we asked were: What is our motive for being of service to others? Do we have an understanding of how people tick? Why do people live in a cycle of suffering that is needless and avoidable? With further contemplation, we gained insight into how many people struggle with life.

Empathy and compassion for all people grew deeper within us. As a result, we saw that each interaction with a human being was one where the values of a therapist could be engaged. We could be loving, understanding, authentic, compassionate and empathic with all people we came across—not just within the boundaries of a one-hour session, not just because someone pays for our time, and not just because someone labels us a “therapist”.

Through letting go of our expectation of what it meant to be a therapist, we found acceptance of our circumstances. Our individual self-practices including meditation, reiki, qi gong, and yoga became the foundation for awareness and inner growth. Without major effort, our external environment shifted in response to our internal transformation. Life became more fluent and opportunities started to flow. This book is one of the fortuitous opportunities. A friend, who had bought a resource kit on how to self-publish a book, asked us to help her review it as she was too busy. By the time we had finished reviewing the kit, the idea for this book had emerged. We appreciated what a book like this could offer others in similar situations, given our initial struggles as natural therapists.

A major influence in shaping this book comes from the writings of Eckhart Tolle, in particular his teachings on success. He emphasises that you cannot *become* successful, you can only *be* successful. Success is a moment to moment experience. It is not about controlling the outcomes of what happens in the future; it is being fully aware in what you do each moment. Success is in this awareness and your state of being. For this reason, this book focuses on inner growth and transformation as the foundation for building a natural therapy practice as opposed to clever marketing tips and strategies. Although these external elements can be relevant, the experiences of well-established therapists reveal that advertising and marketing are secondary and offer limited long-term value. Having a primary

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focus on continuing to grow from within is of utmost importance, otherwise the stress and pressure from constantly creating new marketing strategies become wearing.

In this book, over 20 experienced therapists and spiritual teachers open their hearts to share their wisdom and principles of longevity. With more than 250 years of collective wisdom, the contributing authors tell courageous tales of their inner journeys and subsequent outer experiences. One of these invaluable contributors is Dorje whose support and contacts gave us a string of referrals. One by one we approached therapists and the book slowly began to take shape.

Some contributors we knew personally, such as Greg Williams and Sandy Braiuka. Others, like Dawn Charlton and Guy Bennett, we had met as therapists through private sessions. Another contributor is Rob Stevenson, who has an incredible gift as a satsang enchanter. On many evenings we have joined his music meditation sessions to sing loving mantras.

We discovered Barbara Brewster and Falu Eyre through the Being Woman Retreat. Barbara's heartened enthusiasm for life and her Power of Play workshop came at the perfect time. Falu's openness and passion matches that of Lorna Patten and Eileen Hall. In their stories, all four women share from the heart their experiences of serious illness and how it transformed their awareness as human beings and therapists.

We approached Jost Sauer and Chandrika Gibson after reading their numerous articles in national magazines. We resonated with their gift for blending personal experiences with practical therapeutic advice. Jacqueline Gardam, Anthony Gray and Rosemary Arnott found their way into the book through our research. The remainder of the book came together through word-of-mouth referrals to include Paul Movsessian, Eileen Jeboult, Allan Mourad, Brett Franke, Elohisa, Chris Neill, and Siegfried Gutbrod.

Quite deliberately we selected contributors who practise a range of modalities including acupuncture, naturopathy, massage, kinesiology, yoga, homeopathy, meditation, counselling, flower essences, sound healing and reiki. However, the modality is not important as the growth and transformation of a human being transcends modalities. You therefore may find yourself connecting with the story of someone who practises a therapy which you know little about.

As you read the experience of each therapist, remember that you do not need to have the same experience as them. This is not essential for you to evolve as a therapist or a human being. Also, be aware of your mind making comparisons. The mind may want to compare you to others, compare others to others, or make judgements about others. This can easily become a futile distraction. So where possible, rather than drawing comparisons as you read this book, allow yourself to learn and be inspired by the experiences of other natural therapists. At the same time, bring acceptance to your individual experiences as they are appropriate for your personal growth.

You may notice a few conflicting viewpoints between different therapists throughout the book. This is intended to give you a broad and diverse range of principles on how to practise as a natural therapist. There is no right or wrong way. There is only the way that resonates most with you.

We graciously honour and thank each and every contributor for openly sharing their reflections and wisdom about their inner and outer experiences. Making personal information public for the benefit of others requires trust, insight, honesty and confidence. The resulting warmth and sincerity in each story gives this book a beauty unlike any natural therapy business and marketing guide.

With its consolidated wisdom and personal stories from diverse natural therapists, this book is a valuable resource for all

developing therapists. It provides a unique style of mentoring to help therapists overcome the many challenges they face. In part, these challenges arise from working in a healthcare system where people want outcomes to be achieved quickly and with minimal personal effort. The mainstream mentality tends to want quick fixes of symptoms so people can return to their stressful, toxic and busy life. In comparison, the primary philosophy of natural therapy is to treat the cause not the symptom, encouraging ongoing self-responsibility and self-care. Therefore, it is important for natural therapists to be living examples and “walk the walk” in their own life, not just “talk the talk”. In this way, their role is vital in reshaping the modern-day world of healing so it is in sync with the surrounding natural world.

From their experiences of working in this manner, the contributing natural therapists convey insightful messages about how to blend knowledge and practical experience. Their stories reveal that the key to health, happiness and longevity as a natural therapist is “to practise what you preach”. This is clearly the underpinning principle, as many contributors highlight the necessity of regular self-care and self-practice.

The book unearths important lessons aligned with this principle to help you in your practice. It reveals that as a therapist, your healing is equally as important as the client’s healing. The people, clients, students and everyone you attract, help you as much as you help them. You are not expected to be perfect in the therapeutic relationship. Your clients are responsible for their own healing; your role is to facilitate the client’s healing response through your honesty, actions and doing the best you can. Having a consistent and structured self-practice helps you to cultivate a balanced inner state when you experience challenges in your outer world.

Further wisdom is shared as the stories unfold. Many reiterate their need to cultivate and nurture a driving passion for

their work. For yoga teacher Eileen Hall, her passion for yoga is so strong that teaching does not seem like work. Her therapy is an extension of how she lives her life.

The majority of therapists acknowledge that learning is a lifelong journey. Paul Movsessian explains in his story that he sustains a Zen beginner's mind so he is always ready to expand the limits of his understanding. Similarly, Chandrika Gibson sees herself always as a novice or a perpetual student of life. This approach is essential in the modern world where it may not take long for a therapist to graduate with one or many qualifications. By contrast, traditionally in the East a student took many years if not decades of training with a "master" before they could practise. For this reason, international work experience and study seems common amongst the contributing therapists. One example is homeopath Anthony Gray. After completing his studies, he immersed himself in intensive homeopathic clinics in India—an opportunity which enriched his belief in homeopathy as a healing modality. Whilst this is one approach to expand understanding, it may not be the way for you. The personal stories in this book present many different ways.

In the first story, acupuncturist Greg Williams gives his insights about "the way". He introduces the idea that being in flow with the way brings you everything you need. This flow may reveal itself as many forms in your external world. It may not be what you originally expected, yet in each moment of life it is exactly what you need. This is the way of the natural therapist.

The remaining stories are organised as though they are a bud blooming, culminating with Lorna Patten's transformational story about opening up. Like a novel, the stories are meant to be read in order. But if you wish to do otherwise, the essence and narrative flow of each story remains.

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This book is filled with openness, honesty and love through the personal stories shared within its pages. Please use the space between the stories to contemplate the insights and quotes, make notes, and let awareness flourish within.

For us, the stories in this book have helped us beyond our wildest expectations. We hope they help you too. Enjoy the journey.

Teachers open the door.
You enter by yourself.

Chinese Proverb

‘This insightful book is like
lentil soup for the natural therapist’s soul.’

The Way of the Natural Therapist is for anyone passionate about being a natural therapist. Whether you are starting out or seeking to renew your approach, this book is the ultimate resource to help you on your way.

With more than 250 years of collective wisdom, over 20 experienced therapists share how they were drawn to their path and what they have learned through their journey. Each story takes you deeper into the connection between inner growth and the expansion of a natural therapy practice. The wisdom of others will inspire and encourage you to explore the essence of what it means to be a healer in the modern world.

In *The Way of the Natural Therapist*, you will discover:

- Ideas to help you get started or renew your approach
- How your state of mind drives your external achievements
- Your clients help you grow as much as you help them
- Tips for staying balanced, healthy and happy in your work
- Different approaches to achieving longevity doing what you love

Featured modalities include naturopathy, acupuncture, massage, kinesiology, yoga, homeopathy, meditation, counselling, reiki and sound healing.

Including inspirational personal stories written by:

Jost Sauer • Chandrika Gibson • Paul Movsessian • Eileen Hall
Dawn Charlton • Christos Dorje Walker • Barbara Brewster
Guy Bennett • Allan Mourad • Lorna Patten • *and many more*

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