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How to Cultivate Health Instead of Managing Disease

In his book “Dying to Be Free,” Dr. Leland Stillman exposes how conventional healthcare traps us in debt and illness and explains how to build a new healthcare system focused on cultivating health instead of managing disease.

By Dr. Joseph Mercola

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Story at a glance:

- In “Dying to Be Free: How America’s Ruling Class Is Killing and Bankrupting Americans, and What to Do About It,” Dr. Leland Stillman shares his views on conventional and alternative healthcare systems, and how an entirely new healthcare system can, and is, being built that is focused on maintaining health rather than managing disease.
- Emergency care medicine can make you better in a short amount of time, but 99% of the people in the ER and the urgent care wouldn’t be there if they had a healthy environment, a healthy lifestyle and a healthy diet.
- GoldCare Health & Wellness is creating robust training for clinicians that incorporates the best of allopathic and natural medicine.
- You can save a lot of money by becoming a member of a healthcare sharing ministry such as Medi-Share, Liberty HealthShare or Zion HealthShare. Members share expenses and prices are negotiated with hospitals to minimize the cost of each bill.
- Many are stuck in the health insurance loop because they fear they wouldn’t be able to pay for certain drugs, were they to develop some disease. However, if your doctor can help keep you healthy, you don’t need drugs, and hence you don’t need insurance.

In the interview below, Dr. Leland Stillman discusses his new book, “[Dying to Be Free: How America’s Ruling Class Is Killing and Bankrupting Americans, and What to Do About It.](#)”

He shares his views on both the conventional and alternative healthcare systems, and how an entirely new healthcare system can, and is, being built that is focused on maintaining health rather than managing disease.

Stillman's background

"I grew up in a very conventional family," Stillman says. His mother recalls him being a healthy, happy baby until his first round of vaccines, after which he became fussy, suffering from frequent colds and ear infections.

His sister also suffered adverse effects from her childhood vaccines, which prompted his mother to seek alternative medical solutions.

He continues:

"Over my childhood and teenage years, I remember going to homeopaths, dowzers, CranioSacral therapists; I mean, everybody and anybody. We did cupping, which is a Southeast Asian medical practice. We tried a lot of things. We tried supplements and herbs and all kinds of weird stuff.

"I thought it was fascinating. My dad thought it was total hocus pocus. ... Anyway, I became fascinated ... by health. ...

"I gravitated towards a naturopath who was a very old-school, self-taught, never went to official school, never had a diploma from a real, four-year institution ... he ... did muscle testing, energy healing and all this stuff. I saw real value in what he did.

"In retrospect, I always wonder how much of that was placebo and how much was real, but I can't know that and, to a certain extent, I don't care. What I learned was that there's a lot of value in natural medicine, and there's a lot of corruption in the conventional world. ...

"At the end of the day, what really made me how I am is that I had all of these competing viewpoints in my life. I had conventional medicine that my dad wanted us to do — he still gets the flu shot and

he got at least four [COVID-19 shots] ...

“My mother is very alternative and integrative, but very much splits the difference. She got intimidated into getting two doses of Moderna, until she saw the light and realized this was a total scam. So I grew up in both worlds, and that forced me to think ...

“What really works here, and what matters, and what should we be doing? ... It’s painful to watch people ignore the gradual devolution of American health, which is what my book is about and why I wrote it.”

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Doctors are trapped in, and by, the system

According to Stillman, more and more young doctors are waking up to the problem inherent in the allopathic medical system. The problem is that many of them see no way out. “They’ve made it incredibly hard, by design, to start your own practice,” Stillman says. “They really want to keep all of the physicians corralled.”

A major part of that “prison” is debt. By the time you finish your medical training, your debt can easily be between \$250,000 and \$500,000. Starting your own business means you can fail, so most opt for a more secure income, which means working for a hospital.

Stillman says:

“I think this is also part of why they really ruined organic reach on social media. It’s extremely difficult now to just start posting content on Instagram, Facebook or YouTube. When they started, these platforms were very open, and it was easy for people to get to 100,000, 200,000, 300,000 people following them.

“If you have that many people following you, it’s very easy to start a business, marketing to them, because even if you only have a tiny fraction of them come through, you’re able to pay your bills, pay yourself and make rent/mortgage payments, et cetera.

“Particularly for physicians, as they get out of their training, they’ve been starved for income. They’ve been making \$50,000 to \$55,000 a year, working 12 ... out of 15 days ... and working 80- to 100-hour weeks; 60 was light. ...

“The doctors come out, and they say, ‘Now I can afford nice things. I can finally buy that BMW, and I can finally get the nice house, and so they wind up living paycheck to paycheck with no plan to pay off their debt until 2050, 2060, 2070, and they get to live a nice life. But ... if they miss one income period, all of their debts are in arrears. ...

“So that’s how they’ve roped physicians into this [system], and there’s a lot more docs in the hospital, who wish they hadn’t gotten the COVID vaccine, who are faking their papers, without a doubt, or who got a couple shots and now are going to fake it, and they’re really upset. They’re really unhappy ...

“It’s tough to get numbers on this, right? ... How would you get numbers on this? Everyone’s lying, and if they’re not lying and they’re telling the truth, well then, I guess we have really big problems.

“But ... you just can’t ruin people’s health so immediately after a thing like a vaccine and not have people wake up — and they’ve really put the pedal to the metal. It was one thing when it was five or six vaccines. Kids were getting asthma and allergies. It’s another thing when young people are dropping dead. ...

“Even aside from all the adverse events, the way this [COVID-19 jab issue] has divided society is unbelievable. ...

“The silver lining in this is it’s really getting people off the fence, so we know where people stand, and we can sort this out sooner, rather than continuing the kind of cold war between the home schoolers and the private schoolers and the vaccine choice on this side, and the public schools and the public health establishment on the other.”

Distilling the best from both worlds

Stillman, for his part, went through medical school with the attitude of discerning what worked and what didn’t.

“It became very clear after a very brief period of time, we can really make people better with acute, urgent, emergency care medicine, but 99% of the people in the ER and the urgent care wouldn’t be there if they had a healthy environment, a healthy lifestyle and a healthy diet,” he says.

He continues:

“This is still true of the people in my practice, who know and understand integrative medicine and natural medicine and the value therein, but who were having trouble putting those pieces together ...

“In our modern world, there’s so many things that can derail our health, so I just try to focus on what works here; what doesn’t work?

“At the same time, in integrative medicine, natural medicine, there’s much that doesn’t work or isn’t important. People come into the office and they’re on 20 different supplements. It’s \$1,000 a month.

“They can’t tell you how many thousands or tens of thousands of dollars they’ve spent on X, Y, Z over the years, without resolution of their problem ...

“Not all of natural medicine is what people need. You need different tools for different cases and, frequently, what people are ignoring is the fundamentals. They don’t get the glory a lot of the time because no one is spending their advertising dollars on them.

"I just tried to focus on what works from both fields and then integrate that. I quickly realized that a lot of the luminaries out there on both sides were really corrupted, not necessarily out of any kind of malice or ill will, but a doctor would get famous for X, Y, or Z. ...

"Then ... somebody would find a grant to throw at them, and pretty soon you've got the Plant-Based Medicine Institute at X, Y, and Z University, and they're running around telling everyone that they're eating too much protein ... and cricket flour is better than grass-fed beef because it's richer in tryptophan and arginine ...

"That's what I saw happening in the conventional world ... the IFM [Institute for Functional Medicine] crowd. ...

"I've been running my own [concierge] practice since 2020, where I've put together the best of what I've learned in all those different places and with all the different experiences I've had as a traveling doctor, working in various states.

"Along the way, I've had different part-time jobs at different places and worked and mentored with different people, so I've had a really eclectic experience."

Building a new system from the ground up

Stillman is now collaborating with Dr. Simone Gold. Through [GoldCare Health & Wellness](#), for which Stillman is the wellness director, they're creating robust training for clinicians that incorporates the best of allopathic and natural medicine.

One of the biggest challenges right now is that they don't own all the infrastructure that they're dependent on. For example, when America's Frontline Doctors went viral, their website was hacked and taken down within a matter of hours, and they had to rebuild it from scratch.

The same just [happened to my own site](#) just a few weeks ago. In addition to crashing the main site and the online store, the hackers also destroyed our email servers. The ability of outside agents to destroy your infrastructure is a weak spot that poses a constant threat to success.

Stillman says:

"The thing is, they can't just rebuild it from scratch using all the software as a service that everybody else is using. They have to do it with a completely custom backend.

"People don't realize this, but when you're doing custom software, you cannot be de-platformed and that cannot be hacked into. GoldCare's medical record is so secure that it's actually something of a problem ... everything takes longer because everything is so secure.

"It's wonderful for our patients. It's wonderful for our doctors. It's wonderful that we can't be de-platformed from our own electronic medical record, but it also makes it tough to scale.

"If you buy an off-the-shelf electronic medical record with off-the-shelf billing software, like Stripe or Square, it's easy to just plug all that together and make it work. When you're doing custom software, it takes more time, and there are more bugs that have to be worked out. ...

"We have a fantastic team because what this has done is it's really forced wonderful people out of the woodwork. Everyone who has their critical thinking skills intact is ready to jump ship on the old paradigm and create something new. ...

"What will really get the attention of the authorities is when hundreds and thousands of doctors resign ... because there's already a physician and a nurse shortage. ... The crisis in medical staffing is

unbelievable.”

Conventional medicine and the practice of overcharging

Many don't realize that another healthcare path is even possible. We've been so indoctrinated to believe we need health insurance, for example, or else we can't afford to get even the most basic healthcare.

There is another way though. Were it not for overcharging, many would be able to afford their care out of pocket. For example, a private medical practice can get labs that retail for \$100 for \$2, and that 50-fold price difference can allow them to provide the same or better service for a lower price.

Stillman says:

“I can pay my PA and NP ... out of the money we're saving the patient on the labs. [So patients] can have a consultation with a provider, and the labs ... for a lower fee. ...

“Look at the amount of money you can save by going to, for example, Health Care Sharing Ministries ... Medi-Share, Liberty HealthShare, Zion HealthShare. ... The goal is to share expenses between members and negotiate better prices with hospitals.

“It works differently than regular insurance, in that most of your costs are out of pocket, and then you submit them for reimbursement from the health care sharing ministry. Every month, you have a member fee.

“My fee, as a healthy, 34-year-old male is like \$140 to \$150, which is nothing compared to what I would be buying as an individual, getting a high deductible health insurance plan, which could be hundreds or even thousands of dollars a month.”

How to get out of the insurance trap

People are also stuck in the health insurance loop because they fear they wouldn't be able to pay for certain drugs, were they to develop some disease. An autoimmune drug, for example, could cost you \$200,000 a year if you don't have insurance.

However, if your doctor can help keep you healthy, you don't need drugs, and hence you don't need insurance.

Stillman continues:

“They don't need insurance because they don't need the drugs, and so you can't sell them insurance at a premium rate. That's why the health insurance ministries work.

“They attract people who are already living close to nature, eating healthy food, or are aware that the government is more interested in plundering and enslaving them than elevating them and making them free and independent, critically thinking human beings.

“They tend to be Christians ... part of their charter is that they're not going to cover health effects or consequences from leading a non-biblical lifestyle, [such as] IV drug abuse. ... They're cutting a lot of costs.

“The amount of money we spent on IV drug abusers when I was in the hospital is insane. I mean, these people might come in and get \$100,000, \$200,000, \$300,000 worth of care, and the way the hospital pays for that, or affords that, is they bill the state the maximum amount covered under Medicaid ... which then is just your tax dollars ...

“Then ... they jack up the prices for everybody else who can pay ... That’s why so many wind up in bankruptcy. What the health care sharing ministries have done, which is brilliant, is they basically take these bills, and they say:

“OK, listen. You billed our patient \$60,000 for this kidney stone. Here’s your itemized receipt. We know what these things actually cost. You can take this bill for \$1.40 for 400 mg Tylenol, and you can reduce it to 2.5 cents, and here’s what we’re prepared to pay you, total, for the bill. It’ll be \$5,000. ... We know this will cover all your expenses.’

“That’s what they do, and the hospitals would, frankly, rather get paid than have to go into collections and try and take people to court ...

“I mean, they need to get paid now; otherwise, they go into debt, and they really can’t afford to do that, so they’re happy to work with the health care sharing ministries to at least keep some cash flowing in, and it’s a huge savings to them.”

Many costly interventions are unnecessary

GoldCare is collaborating with healthcare sharing ministries so that GoldCare members can also have a healthcare sharing ministry portion as part of their plan. Ultimately, the goal of GoldCare is to keep you healthy so that you won’t need drugs, surgery and other costly interventions.

According to Stillman:

“I mean, the number of people I get off of high blood pressure medications, not by starting them on a new supplement or herb ... but simply by [teaching] them how to actually take their blood pressure ... [Most] think that they can take their blood pressure any time of day, having done anything ...

“[But] if you take your blood pressure after you’ve watched something or engaged in something that excites you, an argument with your spouse, watching the nightly news ... Instagram, social media — if you do that, your blood pressure may be artificially elevated, so it’s not really reflecting what your blood pressure actually is.

“I’ll get people to take their blood pressure after sitting down for five minutes of rest and relaxation, and, lo and behold, they’ll have completely normal numbers. ...

“[They’re on medication] because they were relying on one or two numbers from the doctor’s office, where they were nervous because they’re seeing the doctor; they’re agitated because they just walked in from the parking lot, because they’re five minutes late, so of course, their blood pressure’s high.

“I mean, this is an epidemic. I think that high blood pressure is massively over-diagnosed because of this, and it’s just one of many examples I can give you about how the mainstream practices [result in unnecessary treatment] ...

“It’s one of the most disillusioning things, as a practitioner, to realize that so many people are not actually invested in their wellness ... A lot of people are still stuck in that mindset of ‘How do I just put enough duct tape on the fender to keep it from dragging on the highway? How do I make the car run another 10,000 miles?’

“Not ‘How can I have optimal vitality? How can I be at the top of my game? How do I take my physical being from where it is to as far away from disease as is physically possible?’ That’s really

what I focus on with my patients now, because it just seems like a waste of time to do anything less.”

How and where can you find truth?

It’s unfortunate, but doctors who want to offer the kind of healthcare services Stillman is focusing on have few educational options. You really have to be a self-starter and self-learner.

When asked what advice he has for healthcare professionals looking for mentors to learn from, as well as laypeople looking for guidance, he replies:

“What’s the key? ...

“You need to focus on tuning in to the [people who got de-platformed](#), who got censored ... because if you’re not tuning in to the people who are getting censored, banned and de-platformed, you’re tuning in to people who are not focusing on what really matters, and they may also be leading you astray and into therapeutic paradigms that don’t really work.

“I mean, you know how much time and effort you’ve put into the material on your website, and people who really want to learn how to practice this need to go there.

“If people are interested in communicating with me about this, they can contact me via my website. I can send them some resources and training programs and things like that, but so much of this [information] is now just out there.”

‘Dying to Be Free’

“Dying to Be Free” is a must-read if you’re a newbie in the field of natural medicine because Stillman does such a good job of placing it within a historical perspective.

He wrote the book because he was frustrated by what he was seeing during the pandemic, and felt people didn’t have the full context of what was happening.

For many, the idea that the medical system might not be doing everything it could to heal and save lives came as a shock, but the fact is that many of the problems that have now become obvious have been going on for decades. Many also dismiss the sheer magnitude of the problem.

As noted by Stillman:

“It’s truly a colossal fraud for the country to spend 25% of every dollar earned ... on health care and for life expectancy to be declining ... We should be figuring out how to get people to live longer, because all the diseases people are dying early from are preventable.”

This is an important point. When life expectancy goes down by a tenth or two-tenths of a year, it’s a really big deal. Well, in 2020 and 2021, [Americans lost nearly three years’ worth of life expectancy](#), which is just astounding.

In my view, this unprecedented drop can only be the result of the COVID-19 jabs. That said, Stillman points out that the prevalence of ill health due to toxic exposures and unhealthy choices is also unsustainable in and of itself.

Stillman says:

“I think we’re going to watch ... fertility drop off of a cliff ... this can’t go on. ... I go back to Pottenger’s Cats study all the time, because it’s such an instructive model for what happens. ... Dr. Francis

Pottenger ... looked at the survival of cats over successive generations ...

“If you malnourish them, they’re able to reproduce for three generations, but then you don’t have any viable offspring after that. I think we’re after that second to third generation of people who really can’t make it because they’re so unhealthy, but that’s very speculative.”

Book summary

The first part of “Dying to Be Free” reviews the problem of medicine being a farce and scam. It then explains how it all happened. Stillman identifies three “parasites” in the U.S.: **Big Tech**, Big Food and Big Pharma. When you look at how they interact, you see Big Tech is running the cover and the advertising for **Big Pharma** and Big Food.

Big Food, in turn, creates the fundamental biochemical imbalances that drive so much of disease. It also creates massive amounts of environmental pollution.

Big Tech also undermines health — especially mental health — by ensuring their products are as addictive as possible. Many spend hours on their phones rather than walking in nature or exercising.

So, they’re all working together to undermine the health of the population and provide cover for each other. This allows them to maximize profits, at least in the short term, while simultaneously covering up the harm that each is doing.

Stillman continues:

“Once you understand that, you’re able to put into context all the social media that you see, how the algorithms are built, why the food at the grocery store is like it is, and why it’s worth it to buy and spend extra money on really healthy, wholesome food and out-of-pocket medical care that’s not within the system.

“Then I go onto, really, what I’ve found to be most impactful in my practice.

“The biggest criticism I have of integrative and natural medicine ... is that most integrative and natural medicine groups’ physician training programs ignore a huge proportion of what makes people sick, so you’ll see people niching down into gut health, and all they do is talk about supplements and diets.

“It’s all about what’s going into the inner-tube. They may pay some lip service to sun exposure or exercise or whatever, but they don’t really know all about it.

“Or you’ll have people who are just focused on EMF, but they don’t ever talk about nutrition ... so you get this kind of piecemeal treatment of health and wellness.

“I try to be very systematic in the way I approach things, so I break down in the book everything into either energy or matter because if you pay attention to all the different types of energy and matter in modern life, you won’t miss anything, at least on a physical level, that’s making you sick.

“When you address those things, it’s remarkable to see how well people can be. That’s why, again, by implementing all this in my practice, I get people the results that they want, and then they don’t need to call me very often, which is the whole goal. ...

“I always have people pushing back on me and saying, ‘Well, I don’t think it’s this, and I don’t think it’s that. I don’t want to check my EMF levels. I’m not interested in this diet or that diet. That’s too hard’

...

“Those people are the ones who fail to get results and wind up paying more for their medical care over the years, because they’re not willing to fully embrace what it takes to actually get to what I call optimal vitality, which is the whole goal.”

Good vs. bad stress

Stillman also explores the impact of stress in his book. Most understand that stress relief is important, but many fail to realize that the real problem is being under too much of the wrong stress and not enough of the right stress.

Examples of beneficial stressors include intermittent fasting, calorie restriction, sauna therapy and exercise. All place stress on your body, but it’s a good kind of stress that has powerful healing benefits.

Negative stress that breaks your body down includes things like staying up too late and mental stress caused by work deadlines or commuting. When you learn to address negative stress and incorporate more positive stress, you develop resiliency, both mentally and physically.

More information

For a tour of everything Stillman has learned about health and healthcare over the last two decades, be sure to read “[Dying to Be Free: How America’s Ruling Class Is Killing and Bankrupting Americans, and What to Do About It.](#)” As noted by Stillman, “people are being really exploited by the medical system,” but that doesn’t have to be you.

He continues:

“The [conventional] model is to turn you into a recurring revenue stream, where you’re renting your body from Big Pharma. You’re renting your ability to think. You’re renting your ability to stay awake. You’re renting your ability to have a normal mood, based on the drugs you’re taking ...

“You’re renting your ability to not become manic or psychotic. You’re renting your ability to run, jump, hike. ... You’re renting your body from these people with the drugs that don’t actually get you resolution of your problem. ... You should ask yourself, what kind of future do you want for your kids?”

If you’d like to work with Stillman and his team of clinicians, go to [StillmanMD.com](#). To apply for a consultation, press the right-hand corner tab and select “Apply for a consultation.”

Originally published on [Dr. Mercola’s Substack page](#).

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Children’s Health Defense.

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Dr. Joseph Mercola

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