

Oby's Wisdom!
A Caveman's Simple Guide to Holistic Health and Wellness

Reading Group Guide

(Note: See the end of this guide for special questions for holistic practitioners.)

Introduction

"Keeping your body healthy is an expression of gratitude to the whole cosmos—the trees, the clouds, everything."

Thich Nhat Han

In the introduction, and throughout the book, I capitalize the word, Nature." Why do you think I do that?

On page 3, I introduce the concept: *"Turn Your Health Inside Out!"* This is the foundational concept of the book—the new mindset that I want to help you develop. Why is this idea important?

On page 6, I offer, "The Basic Truth." Are you able to embrace The Basic Truth? What objections might you have? Each member of the group: think of something about you that you judge as imperfect. Discuss how your perceived imperfections might fit into a grander picture of perfection.

Read the section, "Stop Avoiding and Start Living," found on page 7. Are you on track to cruise...or crash?

What parts of the introduction give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of the introduction challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter One

Life: A Simple Concept

"Life itself is the miracle of miracles."

George Bernard Shaw

Compare and contrast the two definitions of "life," that I present on page 14. In my definition, what do you think I mean by "creatively expand?" What opportunities for creative expansion exist in your life at present?

Turn to page 17. Read the story about the time I was attacked by a monkey in India. Who was the doctor who took care of my wounds? Why did his approach work? Would a similar approach work for you?

Turn to page 20 and read the section entitled, "You Are Completely Alive." Focus on the story about the two pinecones and the new thought process that the story offers. Discuss an example of how you can apply this new thought process to a challenge in your own life.

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Two

Health and Wellness—What Are They Really?

“As for health, consider yourself well.”

Henry David Thoreau

Beginning on page 25, read the story of Jack and Jill. What is the main point of the story? In what way does this story illuminate our approach to health and healthcare...

...as a society?

...as individuals?

Turn to page 31 and read the section entitled, “Do Germs Cause Disease?” In that section, I present two parallel theories. Discuss the two theories. What belief systems does this section of the book challenge?

Beginning on page 33, read the section entitled, “Lottery Tickets for Health.” In this section I say that “Trying to get well quick is like trying to get rich quick.” Within your reading group, compare how closely this passage corresponds to each member’s personal approach to health.

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Three

IT

*“The art of medicine consists of amusing the patient
while nature cures the disease.”*

Voltaire

I open the chapter by referring to an article published in the Journal of American Medical Association that states that conventional medicine is the third leading cause of death in the United States. Discuss my reasoning for why this startling statistic exists.

On pages 46-54, read about my personal journey. What are some of the key moments in my story? What can you learn from these moments and from the story as a whole?

The final sentence of the chapter states, “Stop worrying so much about IT and start taking of you.” What positive changes can you make in your life as a result of this perspective?

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Four

The Matrix

*“The perfect human being is all human beings put together.
It is a collective.
It is all of us together that make perfection.”*
Socrates

Review the concepts of “Placebo Effect” on page 58, “Holographic Consciousness” on page 59, and “Quantum Physics” on page 62. Discuss the concepts in these sections that you find the most thought provoking.

In this chapter, I discuss the concept of “reality” at length. Where might most people’s concept of reality be skewed? Think of specific, real life examples and discuss them.

In the section, “Just Love,” on page 65, I suggest that unconditional love is not the deepest form of love. After reading this section, do you agree or disagree with me. Why?

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Five

Turn Your Health Inside Out

*“You cannot fight darkness, you must turn on light.
You cannot fight disease, you must turn on life.”*
Arno Burnier, D.C.

In the opening paragraphs of the chapter, I discuss our frame of reference in health and healing, and our primary approach to health. I go on to discuss why I feel that, in this regard, there is little difference between conventional and alternative practitioners. Do you agree or disagree with my line of thinking? What examples can you think of that either support or refute my perspective?

On page 70, read the passage called, “An American Family.” How commonplace do you feel this scenario is? If you changed the names of the pharmaceutical products in the story to names of supplements and natural remedies, in what ways is the story different? In what ways is it the same?

Read the section, “Turning Health Inside Out,” beginning on page 73. On page 74, I tell the story of an experience I once had piloting an airplane. What point do I illustrate with that story? Think of a few examples of how your own “sleek and sturdy aerodynamic design” serves you.

Discuss which part of this chapter gives you the greatest sense of empowerment.

Discuss which part of this chapter you find the most challenging.

Chapter Six

Spirit, Soul, Love and Healing

*“You are not a human being in search of a spiritual experience.
You are a spiritual being immersed in a human experience.”*

Teilhard de Chardin

I open this chapter by asking you to perform a quick, simple exercise. But simple is not always easy. Begin this reading group session by devoting a few moments to this exercise. What feelings come up for you? How willing are you to *really* honor this process? If you find yourself resisting it, discuss with the group ways to move beyond your resistance.

Read, “Your Journey,” beginning on page 97. Discuss the passages in this section that most stretch or challenge your belief systems. Discuss the passages that most closely resonate with your thoughts and beliefs.

On pages 110-113, read, “*Your Mind, Heart and Soul Create Your Life.*” Discuss examples of self-talk that may be leading to problems in your life. How can you change your internal dialogue to make it more self-empowering? How can you help your reading group partners do the same?

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Seven

Mother Nature Packed Us a Lunch

“Food is an important part of a balanced diet.”

Fran Lebowitz

In, “*Why Diets Fail,*” beginning on page 121, I discuss, Dr. Mark’s definition of dieting: The process of doing something you don’t like...to take care of something you don’t like. What advice would you give to a member of your reading group who feels stuck in this cycle and wants to break free?

Read, “The Most Important Nutrient” on page 126. How difficult is it to get enough of this nutrient? What are the reasons that so many people choose foods devoid of this nutrient? How can you increase this nutrient in your own diet, and the diet of those close to you?

On page 128, I say, “...‘cheap’ junk food is the most expensive food you will ever buy.” What do I mean by that?

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Eight

Fun, Fitness and Life

*"I am convinced that life in a physical body
is meant to be an ecstatic experience"*

Shakti Gawain

Beginning on page 132, read, *"The Gym and the Trout Stream,"* and then, *"Be like Bob and Todd,"* on page 145. Discuss Bob's and Todd's respective approaches to fitness. Is either approach more valid than the other?

Read, "The First Rule of Fitness..." on pages 135-136. If you agree that the First Rule of Fitness is important, why? If not, why not? How practical is it to incorporate The First Rule Fitness into your own fitness program?

Read, "Harvesting the Couch Potato," beginning on page 139. Why are couch potatoes so common today? How accurate do you feel my statement is that the desire to be physically active is deep inside all of us?

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Nine

Scooter's Wisdom

*"Grown men may learn from very little children, for the hearts of
very little children are pure, and, therefore, the Great Spirit may
show to them many things which older people miss."*

Black Elk

The opening story of the chapter describes what I call the, "oops...forgot..." mentality. Discuss how you think the "oops...forgot..." mentality came about. Can you think of other examples?

Read the story, "Get Dirty!" beginning on page 157. How do you feel about encouraging kids to go out and get dirty? How can parents strike a healthy balance between good hygiene and letting their kids get dirty?

Beginning on page 160, read, "The Most Important Lesson," focusing on are the stories of David and Maddie. Do you believe that Maddie may have had a different outcome had her parents embraced "The Most Important Lesson?" What are some ways we can teach this lesson? What tools can we create to help children answer other kids who reject The Most Important Lesson?

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Chapter Ten

A Day in the Life of Oby

“Let us live for the beauty of our own reality.”
Charles Lamb

There are five sections in this chapter, each of which is entitled: “_____ Turn(s) Health Inside Out.” For each of the five sections, discuss these questions:

How well am I applying this in my life?

What steps can I take to improve?

What parts of this chapter give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of this chapter challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Afterword

“If you want to build a ship, don’t herd people together to collect wood, and don’t assign them tasks and work but rather, teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

On page 177, I ask you to make a lifelong commitment to your own potential. Based on everything you have learned from this book, what may that look like for you?

On page 178, in the section entitled, “Before You Can Do, You Must Be,” I say, “Where you end up in life is driven more by who you are than what you do.” Discuss specific areas in which you can use that as a guiding principle in life.

Ponder this sentence from page 179: “Empower your potential not your problems.” How can this statement help you better follow a wellness lifestyle?

What parts of the afterword give you a sense of empowerment?

What parts of the afterword challenge you, or even push your buttons?

Special Questions for Holistic Health Practitioners

Which sections in the book could you use to give your clientele a clear and simple understanding of turning health inside out?

Which sections can you highlight to your clientele to give them a deeper understanding of your particular healing art?

Which sections would you consider thought provoking to your clientele, and that you could use to engage them in an ongoing discussion on their personal healing, health and well-being?