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SEPTEMBER 2010

My Story Part 2

In July 2010, I became seriously ill for the first time in my life. Up to this point I had lived what I believed to be a healthy and active life. I worked hard, enjoyed my job, my family, my friends, my life in general. Of course I began to notice that I was slowing down a bit but I attributed that to middle age.

On July 3, 2010, I was admitted to Queen's hospital in congestive heart failure. My blood pressure was high, I was swollen and bloated and my blood sugar was high. The main concern was the blood pressure because a middle aged, overweight man of Polynesian ancestry is a good candidate for a heart attack or stroke. Since I had never been ill before, I did not know what to expect, what questions to ask or the treatment option available to me.

The nurses were the first to attend to me. They took my blood pressure, took blood samples, hooked up IV's and all the other necessary procedures for the doctor. Soon, the first doctor came in with a very serious look on his face and asked if I was dizzy or had any chest pain or shortness of breath.

"No, I answered, Why do you ask?"

"Oh just checking, Relax, he said with a reassuring smile, I am going to check on a couple of things and I'll be back."

The nurse came in next with medicine. "We are going to give you this medicine to lower your blood pressure."

Nothing happened for the next hour. I just laid there, the medication dripping into the IV. Then the doctor came back in. "We are going to get a bed for you on the 6th floor. Looks like you will be spending a few days here with us."

I didn't know what to say except to nod in agreement. The 6th floor was supposed to mean something. I came to learn that out was the cardiac care unit.

The next morning I learned that when you go into the hospital, you are assigned a member of their staff. They are called Hospitalists. She was the first doctor to see me

that morning. Soon after that I met the Chief of Cardiology accompanied by 6 very eager, very attentive residents. He took one look at me and declared, "You have had a heart attack!"

"No, I replied, I didn't have a heart attack."

"Are you questioning me?"

"No, I don't mean any disrespect but I didn't have a heart attack."

"What qualifies you to make that statement?"

"Well, I am a Chiropractor and I know about the body and I had no symptoms of a heart attack."

"A Chiropractor?" then he walked out into the hall and gave his order to the nurse.

The nurse gave me medicine that made me really sick. I thought I was going to have a heart attack or a stroke or something. I could not walk, I felt weak and dizzy.

The next day was Sunday so nothing was happening. Just medicine and food. Not much food, no seasoning, no flavor, no salt, overcooked, canned vegetables.

Monday morning after breakfast, down to the cardiac lab. They ran all kinds of tests on my heart and found nothing; no blockages, no aneurysms. There to meet me when I returned to my room was the Cardiologist but no residents this time.

"You didn't have a heart attack." And I never saw him again.

Relieved that I didn't have a heart attack I could relax for awhile. The next doctor that I met was a Nephrologist. I had never heard of a Nephrologist. He introduced himself to me and told me that my kidneys failed.

"What?", I asked

"Yeah. You have to go on dialysis. Your best option long term is to get a transplant." Then he smiled and walked out of the room.

I was devastated. I couldn't even process the information. My kidneys failed. That means I am going to die.

I rejected the idea of getting a transplant for a lot of reasons I did not think transplants were natural or even healthy. You have to take medicine for the rest of your life. What kind of life is that? Then there is dialysis. Life support. If you miss dialysis for a week you are dead. What kind of life have I created for myself? How could this happen to me?

I had to figure this out. Since I had no history of kidney problems could my kidneys spontaneously awaken from their slumber? I was feeling better... maybe all I needed was a couple of days rest to recover?

Then I had to deal with the possibility that this was the end, that I would soon die and leave everything behind. I was not afraid of death and understood that death is part of the life experience but I had things left to do, so much more life to experience. For many people, travel, retirement, adventure is what they look forward to. For me I had invested about 25 years into understanding energy healing and felt like I was near a critical point of understanding and enlightenment and all that would be lost if I died.

This tragic story does have a happy ending. It turns out that this experience taught me lots about the difference between medicine and healing and the importance of being informed and learning to advocate for yourself.

The first lesson I learned is that medicine is a business. When you enter the hospital you become the patient of the hospital list who's primary responsibility is to get you stable and out of the hospital. It is not a matter of being well or healed.

The second lesson that I learned that you cannot assume that your doctor knows what is best for you. Doctors are limited by what the insurance company allows them to do and what the hospital expects them to do.

Don't allow yourself to be consumed by the diagnosis. A diagnosis is simply a medical conclusion of your condition. It is not always a death sentence unless you make it so. Let the doctors worry about treating the disease; you tend to your life responsibilities.

Finally, know the difference between a disease and a dysfunction. A disease is a condition that requires medical intervention to prevent death. A dysfunction is a condition that requires intervention to facilitate life. A physician is trained to treat disease. His tools are limited to the treatment of disease and his focus is the treatment of disease. There is an old saying, to a surgeon every case is surgical. A healer is trained to treat dysfunction, his focus is on restoring normal function.

Every disease is accompanied by dysfunctions but not every dysfunction is linked to a disease. You need both a physician and a healer to address your condition.